Dreams, Memory and Imagination in Byzantium

Byzantina Australiensia

Editorial Board

Ken Parry (*Macquarie University*)
Bronwen Neil (*Macquarie University*)
Amelia Brown (*University of Queensland*)
Meaghan McEvoy (*Macquarie University*)
Danijel Dzino (*Macquarie University*)
Wendy Mayer (*Australian Lutheran College | University of Divinity*)
Roger Scott (*University of Melbourne*)

VOLUME 24

The titles published in this series are listed at *brill.com/byza*

Dreams, Memory and Imagination in Byzantium

Edited by

Bronwen Neil
Eva Anagnostou-Laoutides



BRILL

LEIDEN | BOSTON

Cover illustration: Fol 98v of Cod. Laur. Plut. IX.28, containing the Christian Topography of Cosmas Indicopleustes, is reproduced on the cover with the kind permission of the Biblioteca Laurenziana, Florence.

Εἰ δὲ καὶ περὶ τῶν ἀντιπόδων ἐπεξεργαστικώτερον θελήσειέ τις ζητῆσαι, ῥαδίως τοὺς γραώδεις μύθους αὐτῶν ἀνακαλύψει

COSMAS INDICOPLEUSTES, I.20

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Neil, Bronwen, editor.
Title: Dreams, memory, and imagination in Byzantium / edited by Bronwen Neil, Eva Anagnostou-Laoutides.
Description: Leiden ; Boston : Brill, 2018. | Series: Byzantina Australiensia, ISSN 0725-3079 ; Volume 24 | Includes index.
Identifiers: LCCN 2018028901 (print) | LCCN 2018031578 (ebook) | ISBN 9789004375710 (E-book) | ISBN 9789004366862 (hardback : alk. paper)
Subjects: LCSH: Dreams—Byzantine Empire. | Memory—Byzantine Empire. | Imagination.
Classification: LCC BF1078 (ebook) | LCC BF1078 .D745 2018 (print) | DDC 154.6/309495—dc23
LC record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2018028901

Typeface for the Latin, Greek, and Cyrillic scripts: "Brill". See and download: brill.com/brill-typeface.

ISSN 0725-3079
ISBN 978-90-04-36686-2 (hardback)
ISBN 978-90-04-37571-0 (e-book)

Copyright 2018 by Koninklijke Brill NV, Leiden, The Netherlands.
Koninklijke Brill NV incorporates the imprints Brill, Brill Hes & De Graaf, Brill Nijhoff, Brill Rodopi, Brill Sense, Hotei Publishing, mentis Verlag, Verlag Ferdinand Schöningh and Wilhelm Fink Verlag.
All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, translated, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without prior written permission from the publisher.
Authorization to photocopy items for internal or personal use is granted by Koninklijke Brill NV provided that the appropriate fees are paid directly to The Copyright Clearance Center, 222 Rosewood Drive, Suite 910, Danvers, MA 01923, USA. Fees are subject to change.

This book is printed on acid-free paper and produced in a sustainable manner.

Contents

Acknowledgements IX
List of Illustrations X
Abbreviations XI
Contributors XIII

An Introduction to *Dreams, Memory and Imagination in Byzantium* 1
Bronwen Neil

PART 1
Dreams, Memory and Imagination in the Byzantine Philosophical Tradition

1 The Dangers of Purity: Monastic Reactions to Erotic Dreams 17
Inbar Graiver

2 Locating Memory and Imagination: From Nemesius of Emesa to John of Damascus 35
Ken Parry

3 Daydreaming and Lusting after the Divine: Clement of Alexandria and the Platonic Tradition 57
Eva Anagnostou-Laoutides

4 The Inner Source of Dreams: Synesius of Cyrene's Reception in the Palaiologan Era 82
Francesco Monticini

PART 2
Prophetic Dreams and Visions in Imperial Contexts

5 Dynastic Dreams and Visions of Early Byzantine Emperors (ca. 518–565 AD) 99
Meaghan McEvoy

6 Dreaming of Treason: Portentous Dreams and Imperial Coups in Seventh-Century Byzantine Apocalyptic Discourse 118
Ryan W. Strickler

7 Desire, Dreams, and Visions in the Letters of Emperor Konstantinos VII Porphyrogennetos and Theodoros of Kyzikos 136
Mark Masterson

8 The Dream Come True? Matthew of Edessa and the Return of the Roman Emperor 160
Maximilian Lau

PART 3
***Dreams and Memory in Byzantine Chronicles and* Encomia**

9 Dreams and Imaginative Memory in Select Byzantine Chronicles 183
Roger Scott

10 Dream Portents in Early Byzantine and Early Islamic Chronicles 208
Bronwen Neil

11 Psellos' Use and Counter-Use of Dreams, Visions and Prophecies in His *Chronographia* and His *Encomium for His Mother* 227
Penelope Buckley

PART 4
Remembering the Saints in Hymns and Hagiography

12 Loyalty and Betrayal: Villains, Imagination and Memory in the Reception of the Johannite Schism 249
Wendy Mayer

13 "As if in a Vision of the Night …": Authorising the Healing Spring of Chonai 265
Alan H. Cadwallader

14 Dreaming Liturgically: Andrew of Crete's *Great Kanon* as a Mystical Vision 293
Andrew Mellas

15 Divine Fantasy and the Erotic Imagination in the *Hymns* of Symeon the New Theologian 315
Derek Krueger

General Index 343

Acknowledgements

Our volume grew out of papers offered at the 19th Biennial Conference of the Australian Association for Byzantine Studies, on 24–26 February 2017, at Monash University Law Chambers, Melbourne. Selected and revised conference papers have been supplemented by others to cover the three-fold theme of *Dreams, Memory and Imagination in Byzantium*. The conference, convened by Eva Anagnostou-Laoutides, Bronwen Neil and Ken Parry (current president of the Association), brought together 45 scholars from the United States, Japan, New Zealand, Italy, and Australia. We are grateful to the conference host, Monash University, and our employer, Macquarie University, for their financial support. The editors are also grateful to the Australian Research Council for funding their individual projects. Bronwen Neil holds a Senior Future Fellowship on "Dreams, Prophecy and Violence from Early Christianity to the Rise of Islam" (FT 140100226). Eva Anagnostou holds a Senior Future Fellowship on "The History of Inebriation and Reason from Plato to the Latin Middle Ages" (FT 160100453).

A broad-ranging volume like this one, whose sources stretch from Byzantine Greek and Latin to Hebrew, Arabic and Armenian, requires expert linguistic help along the way. We particularly thank Natalie Mylonas for her help with the Hebrew in Chapter 6, Nicholas Matheou for his aid with reading the Armenian cited in Chapter 8, and Aydogan Karz for his correction of transcribed Arabic names in Chapter 10.

Various colleagues gave generously of their time to read and comment on the draft chapters. Each chapter has been anonymously peer-reviewed. We thank the members of the editorial board of Byzantina Australiensia for their helpful suggestions, and editorial assistants Kosta Simic and Sandra Sewell for proofreading. Our colleagues at Brill, Marjolein van Zuylen and Loes Schouten, brought the volume safely through the publication process with their careful oversight.

BN and EA

List of Illustrations

Map

8.1 Map of Cilicia and the Near East, c. 1140 164

Illustrations

2.1 Illustration of the brain ventricles. The University Library, Cambridge, MS Gr.g.1.1, ca. 1300 50
2.2 Illustration of the *sensus communis*. Gregor Reisch, *Margarita philosophica* (Freiburg im Breisgau 1503), 461 51

Abbreviations

AE	*l'Année épigraphique*
ANF	Ante-Nicene Fathers
APH	*Acta Philippi* (Bovon et al.)
BMGS	*Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies*
BYZA	Byzantina Australiensia
BYZZ	*Byzantinische Zeitschrift*
CCSG	Corpus Christianorum series graeca
CFHB	Corpus fontium historiae byzantinae
CSEL	Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum latinorum
CSHB	Corpus scriptorum historiae byzantinae
FC	Fathers of the Church
GCS	Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten Jahrhunderte
GRBS	*Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies*
HE	*Historia ecclesiastica*
IG	*Inscriptiones graecae*, vols 1–14
IGLR	*Inscripţiile greceşti şi latine în România* (Popescu)
IGLS	*Inscriptions grecques et latines de la Syrie* (Jalabert et al.)
IGR	*Inscriptiones graecae ad res romanas pertinentes* (Cagnat)
IGUR	*Inscriptiones graecae urbis romae* (Moretti)
IK	*Inschriften griechischer Städte aus kleinasien* (Egelmann)
IK Iznik	*Katalog der antiken Inschriften des Museums van Iznik* (*Nikaia*) (Şahin)
IMT Kaikos	*Inschriften Mysia und Troas* (Barth & Stauber)
IStrat	*Die Inschriften von Stratonikeia* (Şahin)
ITralles	*Die Inschriften von Tralleis und Nysa* (Poljakov)
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
MAMA IV	*Monumenta Asiae Minoris Antiqua* (Buckler et al.)
MAMA IX	*Monumenta Asiae Minoris Antiqua* (Levick et al.)
MDAI(A)	*Mitteilungen des deutschen archäologischen Instituts. Athenische Abteilung*
NF	Neue Folge
ODB	*Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, 3 vols (Kazhdan)
PG	Patrologiae cursus completus. Series graeca
PLRE	*The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire*, vols 1–3
POxy	*Oxyrhynchus Papyri*
PTS	*Patristische Texte und Studien*
RECAM	*Regional Epigraphic Catalogues of Asia Minor*
RPC	*Roman Provincial Coinage online*

SEG	*Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum*
SNG	*Sylloge Nummorum Graecorum*
SC	Sources chrétiennes
TAM 2.1	*Tituli Asiae Minoris* 2 (Kalinka)
TAM 5.1	*Tituli Asiae Minoris* (Herrmann)
TAM 5.2	*Tituli Asiae Minoris* (Herrmann)
TTH	Translated Texts for Historians

Contributors

Eva Anagnostou-Laoutides
Macquarie University, Australia

Penelope Buckley
University of Melbourne, Australia

Alan H. Cadwallader
Charles Sturt University, Australia

Inbar Graiver
Tel Aviv University, Israel

Derek Krueger
University of North Carolina at Greensboro, United States

Maximilian Lau
Hitotsubashi University, Japan

Mark Masterson
Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand

Wendy Mayer
Australian Lutheran College, University of Divinity / University of South Africa

Meaghan McEvoy
Macquarie University, Australia

Andrew Mellas
University of Sydney, Australia

Francesco Monticini
Roma Tre University, Italy / EHESS, France

Bronwen Neil
Macquarie University / University of South Africa

Ken Parry
Macquarie University, Australia

Roger Scott
University of Melbourne, Australia

Ryan W. Strickler
Macquarie University, Australia

An Introduction to *Dreams, Memory and Imagination in Byzantium*

Bronwen Neil

The value placed on dreams, memory and imagination in Byzantine communities of the 4th to 15th centuries may appear strange to the modern mind. Unlike the post-Enlightenment view of dreams as one of many products of the imagination, all of which hold a secondary place in relation to "the real", in Byzantium dreams and other imaginary sense perceptions carried a social significance that made them *more* important than mundane reality. Even more strangely, dreams and memories were given equal weight as the imaginary in Byzantine histories, literature, art, and liturgical texts. While we are familiar with dreams and miracles in hagiography, modern readers might not expect to find the same in histories and chronicles. Byzantine readers were not phased by the inclusion in these narratives of events that we might consider products of the imagination; rather they accepted them as lending spiritual weight to a narrative of God's intervention in human affairs, and Byzantine affairs in particular.

The authors of this volume seek to go beyond the modern disjunction between the rational and the irrational, to appreciate the layers of social and individual meanings that the imaginary had in the lives of Byzantine dreamers, writers, chronographers, hymnographers, traders and artists, and to consider how their writings and art were taken up and viewed, read and heard by both ordinary and elite Byzantine citizens. In doing so, they build upon the recent work of scholars who have studied various aspects of dream interpretation and dream narratives in classical Greco-Roman, patristic, medieval and Byzantine literature.[1] However, our authors seek to extend previous analyses of such texts beyond dreaming to the linked cognitive fields of imagining and remembering. Our fields of reference also include studies of holy places and holy objects, in recognition of the fact that the material world was permeated by the imaginary in Late Antiquity and the Byzantine era, and had an important function in creating community memories.

Dreams and their corollaries, memory and imagination, may seem an amorphous subject of study, and of limited application to the current day. However,

1 See especially Gerok-Reiter and Walde 2012; Graf 2010; Harris 2009; Harrisson 2013; Mavroudi 2014; Miller 1994; Näf 2004; Scioli and Wade 2010; Weber 2000.

© KONINKLIJKE BRILL NV, LEIDEN, 2018 | DOI:10.1163/9789004375710_002

the interpretation and study of dreams is a living tradition in the post-Byzantine world, whether Orthodox, Catholic or evangelical Christian, Jewish or Muslim. The cultural import of remembering dreams is evident in the survival of dream key manuals, which have been studied in detail elsewhere,[2] and are still in use in some Christian, Muslim and Jewish communities. Comparative studies of early Byzantine Greek and Arabic dream manuals by Oberhelman, Mavroudi and others[3] have revealed the concerns of ordinary dreamers, both Christian and Muslim.

The textual sources mined here contain less well known descriptions of dreams, memory and the imagination, some more popular (for example, chronicles, hymns, and saints' *lives*) and others intended for an elite audience, for instance: Michael Psellos' funeral orations, philosophical tracts on dream interpretation and the location of the memory, and the letters exchanged between an emperor and his beloved. We also include the study of depictions in icons, which can shed light on dreams, memory and imagination and how they reinforced each other in establishing community identities.

1 Methodological Considerations

Our main methodological consideration is the need to respect context, whether that of the original work, or its reception sometimes centuries later. In all the Byzantine texts considered here, whether private letters, poems, hymns or treatises, the audience is the key to their interpretation. It is therefore important to establish for whom they were intended at the time of composition, and who later interpreted them for readers of their own day. The readers of court poetry undoubtedly held different views on homoerotic desire from the monks whom Evagrius sought to instruct.[4] A philosopher-bishop like Synesius placed a different value on dreams and their prophetic potential from those who saw dreams as an index of virtue and moral progress, or its opposite, a demonic hindrance to spiritual progress.[5]

As well as the criterion of audience, two other criteria stand out as determinative for understanding Byzantine conceptions of dreams, memory and

2 See Guidorizzi 1980; Mavroudi 2002; Oberhelman 1991, 2008, 2014.

3 Oberhelman 1991; Mavroudi 2002; Bulkeley, Adams and Davis 2009.

4 On Evagrius of Pontus' dream theory and particularly his approach to erotic dreams, see Chapter 1 below.

5 See Neil, Costache and Wagner forthcoming on the virtue ethics of Synesius in relation to dreaming, in his early fifth-century work *De insomniis*. On the reception of Synesius, see Francesco Monticini's chapter below.

imagination. They are genre and temporal location. Penelope Buckley shows how a single Byzantine author (Psellos) can make different use of dreams and express different attitudes towards them, depending on whether he is writing historiography or an encomium. Roger Scott and Bronwen Neil both focus on a single genre, chronicles, but taken together their chapters show how the use of dreams became more frequent over the centuries. Scott rightly observes that the chroniclers reported various miraculous portents, such as extreme weather events and astronomical phenomena, alongside dreams.[6] These are indicative of a changing thought world in early Byzantium, one that differed in interesting ways from the Greco-Roman one that preceded it. Freudian dream analysis, with its recognition that many dreams stem from the unconscious mind, where repressed desires are processed, is of little use here.[7] The Byzantine world, like all pre-modern cultures, did not priviledge the rational over the irrational.

1.1 *Dreams, Memory and Imagination in the Byzantine Philosophical Tradition*

Given the defining importance of literary and intellectual context for these studies of dreams, memory and the imagination, the volume has been divided into four major parts. The first pertains to the Byzantine philosophical tradition, where the major dividing line is between Christian monks and others, such as Clement and Origen of Alexandria, Synesius of Cyrene and Nemesius of Emesa, who considered themselves philosophers like any other in the pre-Christian tradition.[8]

The connection between dreams and desire is something that is accepted in today's post-Freudian world. However, for Byzantine Christians to come to terms with illicit dream images, without the benefit of a theory of the unconscious, was a different matter entirely. Three of our authors deal with homoerotic imagery, first of monastic dreams (Graiver); second, the dreams and fantasies described in the letters between an emperor and a favoured monk (Masterson); and third, in Symeon the New Theologian's hymns, where the divine is addressed as a male lover (Krueger). Each author shows that dreams and fantasies held an ambiguous place in Byzantine literature: were they simply metaphors of human and divine longing, or something more?

Monastic writings from Egypt, Gaza, and Sinai indicate the practical challenges that dreams posed to eastern monks in their attempts to implement

6 Scott's chapter in this volume.

7 See Neil 2016, 49–52, for a summary of modern methodological approaches to dreams.

8 See Chapters 2, 3 and 4 below.

ideals of purity in their ascetic regimen. The eastern tradition of Evagrius of Pontus was mediated to the West by John Cassian of Marseilles, among others. Although the classical background to the notion of "yearning for the divine" in Cassian and other writers of the western Christian tradition has attracted an impressive amount of scholarship, the oneirological theories of ancient philosophers and their influence on Byzantine thought have been given considerably less attention.

Chapter 1, by Inbar Graiver, treats erotic desire as a problem in monastic life. Graiver considers the ways in which theological ideals of spiritual perfection conditioned the reactions of Byzantine monks to experiences of erotic dreams. Her point of departure is a case study on erotic dreams suffered by the monk Moses in Palladius' *Lausiac History* (*Historia Lausiaca*), which was written in 419–20. The second case study is reported by John Cassian in book 22 of his *Conference*s, entitled *De nocturnis illusionibus*. Here, Cassian describes an anonymous monk who, over a long period, "used to be sullied in his sleep by an unclean emission" whenever he was preparing to receive communion. It seems that, the harder these two monks tried to avoid impure thoughts in their waking hours, the more they kept cropping up in the dreaming state. Graiver draws on social psychologist Daniel Wegner's research into the paradoxical effects of suppression of sexual thoughts, and relates Wegner's findings to reports on the problematic dreamlife of Byzantine monks in Late Antiquity.

The link between dreams and the imagination was at the heart of Neoplatonist deliberations on the value of dreaming. In Chapter 2, Ken Parry introduces the larger questions surrounding memory and the imagination as they were understood from the 4th to 8th centuries. The physical location of the functions of memory and imagination was a matter for debate in the ancient world, when there was no consensus on where these faculties were located. For some, including Aristotle, the heart was the seat of memory and imagination, while for others, following Galen, it was the head. In the early Byzantine period, the doctrine of ventricular localisation was promoted by Aëtius of Amida (6th century). This theory subsequently gained widespread acceptance in the Greek, Latin and Arabic medieval worlds. Parry compares the treatise *On the Nature of Man* by Christian philosopher Nemesius of Emesa (4th/ 5th century) and the writings of John of Damascus (d. c. 750) on the physical and anatomical location of memory, cognition, and imagination in the human person.

Chapter 3, by Eva Anagnostou-Laoutides, concerns the relationship between evil intention (*yetzer hara*) and the problematic concept of "lusting after the divine" in Clement of Alexandria. The author cites the recent work of Ishay Rosen-Zvi, who has argued that Clement of Alexandria and other patristic thinkers in Late Antiquity employed the Jewish concept of *yetzer hara*

("inclination to evil") when discussing destructive sexual desire, which was construed as demonic.[9] Clement discusses the lustful gaze as a most dangerous affliction that causes people to "daydream." Daydreaming is understood to be the same as sinning since imagining sexual intercourse is as unlawful as acting on this impulse. However, Clement argues that those who look on beauty in chaste love use the body as a vehicle to contemplate the true, spiritual beauty. Based on this distinction, Anagnostou-Laoutides examines Clement's familiarity with Platonic definitions of *phantasia* and the role of beauty in visionary spiritual ascents. She then focuses on the role played by Origen, Dionysius the Areopagite, and Maximus Confessor in transmitting the Byzantine visionary experience ("daydreaming" to use Clement's phrase) of an ecstatic union with God.

Conflicting receptions of ancient oneirological theories are the subject of Francesco Monticini's chapter on Synesius of Cyrene (d. c. 410) and his treatise *On Dreams*. Synesius, a contemporary of Evagrius but a philosopher-bishop rather than a monk, assumed that dreams were cognisable, and argued that they must be perceived in the same way as sense perceptions: thus, they pass through the centre of human self-consciousness, designated by Synesius the "imaginative *pneuma*" (πνεῦμα φανταστικόν). This is only the beginning of a philosophical demonstration aimed at proving that all images belonging to the realm of Becoming, including oneiric ones, reside in the human soul and do not have their source in the material realm. In this manner, Synesius completely reversed the traditional Greek conception of dreams. However, any attempt to interpret his work demands recourse to the Byzantine commentaries on this work. Monticini adduces two commentaries: the first composed by Nicephorus Gregoras at the beginning of the 14th century, and another of a similar date, anonymous and as yet unedited. Both commentaries are found to present new elements that improve our understanding of Synesius' unique philosophical approach to dreams.

1.2 *Prophetic Dreams and Visions in Imperial Contexts*

In the second part, we present four chapters on prophetic dreams in court poetry and historiography. Dreams and visions played an important role in Byzantine historiography, where they could be used to move the narrative along or signal plot changes, operating in a similar way as in the Byzantine novel, as Suzanne MacAlister has shown.[10] Dreams were particularly useful for promoting dynastic succession: they could be used to legitimate unpopular or

9 Rosen-Zvi 2011, 38.

10 MacAlister 1996, 115–152.

morally suspect actions and events in the imperial sphere, such as violent regime change. Their other literary functions included authenticating prophetic traditions, revealing divine intervention in history, and establishing the authority of the chronicler.

Meaghan McEvoy demonstrates that the dynastic imperial dream was an important subset of the dream accounts found in historiography, as well as panegyric. She takes five examples from these two genres: the court poetry of Claudius Claudianus at the end of the 4th century; the *Anonymus Valesianus* in the early 6th century; the panegyrist Corippus in the same century; and the *Chronicles* of both Theophanes Confessor (9th century) and Theophylact Simocatta (10th century). Each of the dreams she studies concerns imperial heirs—the desire for them, the need to choose between them, or their execution—and points to the preoccupation of emperors and indeed commentators of the time with issues of dynasty and succession in the early Byzantine world. The author explores the discourse of imperial dreams and visions in the early Byzantine period against the contemporary politics of the era.

Ryan Strickler takes up another motif of early Byzantine imperial histories: the treasonous dream in apocalyptic discourse. Several recent studies have illuminated the previously neglected field of Byzantine apocalyptic.[11] However, much of their work has focused on middle and late Byzantine sources and little consideration has been given to the intersection between dreams and apocalyptic. Strickler explores the intersection between them in seventh-century Byzantine literature, this being a time when dreams and visions were frequently used to foretell and explain disaster. Dreams related in the *Historiae* of Theophylact Simocatta predict the overthrow of the emperor Maurice. The *Apocalypse of Zerubbabel* (*Sefer Zerubbabel*), a Jewish text, predicts the advent of a messiah who will defeat the diabolic figure of Armilos. Other literary evidence, such as the *Trial of Maximus the Confessor*, suggests that dreams were used to justify attempted *coups d'état*, even if such attempts were ultimately abortive, as in the case of Gregory the exarch's plan to overthrow Constans II in 646. Such dreams, by their nature, Strickler argues, claim to reveal the hidden will of God, and are by definition apocalyptic.

Continuing with prophetic traditions in imperial politics, Maximilian Lau takes up the prophetic tradition in the Armenian *Chronicle* of Matt'ēos Uṙhayec'I, more commonly known as Matthew of Edessa, which dealt with eleventh-century predictions of the triumphant return of the Roman emperor in lands under Armenian control in the 12th century. By and large, these

11 Alexander 1985; McGinn 2003; Kraft 2012; Shoemaker 2016. See the bibliography of Chapter 6 below.

prophecies had failed to materialise, until the eastern campaigns of John II Komnenos in the 1130s and 40s. The victory of John was by no means assured and the prophecy, as quoted by the pro-Byzantine Matthew, was wishful thinking rather than a portent of victory. This chapter highlights how Matthew's Armenian Cilicia was a dynamic region where aspirations for Armenian independence competed with the hopes of factions who supported a return to the universal rule of the Roman Empire. It illustrates how prophecy could be re-purposed from one generation to the next as the political climate evolved in the broader Byzantine world.

Like Inbar Graiver and Derek Krueger, Mark Masterson treats homoerotic desire in dreams, but in the context of an epistolary correspondence between lovers. His chapter examines the eighteen letters, notable for their frequent homoerotic warmth, that passed between Konstantinos VII Porphyrogennetos (945–959) and Theodoros of Kyzikos. Scholars have traditionally shied away from analysing these letters (probably composed in the 940s) on this basis, dismissing the erotic language as mere metaphor.[12] The letters also feature frequent mentions of dreams and visions. If we consider dreams and visions with desire in two letters, one from Konstantinos (*ep.* 3) and the reply from Theodoros (*ep.* 4), we find that homoeroticism exists in dreams and in waking visions. The letters show homoerotic desire as a thing of imagination beyond conscious control *and* an object of conscious rumination. Homoerotic desire's different modes make it a metaphor for friendship that at times advertises its non-metaphoricity. Masterson suggests that we cannot rule out actual desire between these two men. If not that, then these letters must at least attest to relatively low rates of what we could call, anachronistically, homophobia in the empire during the Macedonian dynasty.

1.3 *Dreams and Memory in Byzantine Chronicles and* Encomia

The next three chapters concern dreams and other portents in Byzantine universal chronicles. Roger Scott begins with Constantine's sighting of the True Cross on 28 October 312, surely the most important vision to have occurred in the so-called Common Era, leading as it allegedly did to the emperor's conversion. This vision was both an apocalyptic sign and a signal of violent regime change legitimated by none other than God. Scott does not attempt to answer the question of where or how the vision occurred but examines rather the bland handling of this and later visions in Byzantine universal chronicles. He asks whether they are any more significant in Byzantines' understanding of history than other visual portents, such as that reported of the ordinary jug

12 E.g. Messis 2006, 823.

of water that, in the time of Julian the Apostate (361–363), fermented and turned into sweet wine, thus heralding better times with Julian's imminent demise; or of earthquakes which so frequently accompanied a change of ruler. Thus, Scott positions the rare reports of dreams in early chronicles within a context where portents and other supernatural phenomena were becoming increasingly normal.

Bronwen Neil continues the study of chronicles in her chapter, where she compares the prophetic dreams related in Byzantine and Islamic chronicles with those that feature in hagiography from the same period. She expands the chronological scope of previous studies of dreams in Byzantine historiographic literature, which have focussed on the 11th century onwards, from the middle to late Byzantine periods.[13] Apart from the evidence of dream-key manuals mentioned above, there is other evidence of cultural cross-over in early Islamic and Byzantine dream narrative accounts in these two genres, which reflect less the concerns of ordinary people and more the concerns of emperors, soldiers and saints. Even a cursory comparison of the two traditions suggests that early Islamic dream-narrators told dreams in a similar way to their Byzantine contemporaries, and that their dream accounts served similar literary functions in both hagiography and historiography.

Penelope Buckley highlights the importance of genre for the interpretation of dreams and visions. While these are sparse in Michael Psellos' *Chronographia*, he minimises, distances, or even derides them where they do appear. In his *Encomium for his Mother*, they are of prime importance, and some indeed are given as his own. The discrepancy is only partly a matter of genre, for many Byzantine histories take dreams and visions seriously, as we saw in previous chapters, while some of Psellos' orations do not use them at all. The difference lies more in the ways Psellos presents himself. In the *Chronographia*, he is a self-made, king-making philosopher, a sceptical, rational innovator who alone decides what to value or discard from non-Christian traditions: he has himself unearthed some of these and can take responsibility for their reception. Dreams and visions are for others. In the *Encomium for his Mother*, by stark contrast, it is precisely dreams and visions which sanction his far-reaching studies, connecting his philosophy to the divine wisdom. These two works, *Chronographia* and the *Encomium for his Mother*, construct two versions of Psellos, and dreams and visions, or their absence, plot the difference.

13 Calofonos 2014; Magdalino 2014.

1.4 *Remembering the Saints in Hymns and Hagiography*

The final part of the volume deals with religious commemorations of saints and the sacred, in hagiography and liturgy, as a form of cultural memory which was subject to manipulation by later generations. The common theme in the first three chapters here is repurposing: the use and reuse of commemorative texts and objects in different contexts through time. As we saw in the previous chapters, imagination interacts with both dreams and memory in curious ways, especially when it comes to creative remembering of the saints.

The first two chapters of this section deal with the complicated histories of reception of saints' lives by later Byzantine Christians. In her study of the *Life of John Chrysostom* attributed to George of Alexandria (d. 630), but composed in the 8th century, Wendy Mayer examines the conflicting roles of memory and re-imagining in the production of this *Life*. By the time it was composed, the heroic status of the exiled bishop John and the villainous role of the Empress Eudoxia and the Alexandrian bishop, Theophilus, had become standard elements in the successive retelling of John Chrysostom's story. Mayer digs deeper into the construction of memory in this fashion, identifying it as a process in two stages. Using as a case-study the Johannite schism (c. 403–438 CE), Mayer uses Moral Foundations Theory to explore the agency of loyalty/betrayal in the fostering of anger against perceived traitors and in consolidating partisan in-group cohesion during stage 1, the emergence and duration of the schism. She demonstrates how the reported memory of events of the schism, with its emphasis on the polarities of loyalty and betrayal, and especially on imagined villains, functioned in stage 2, the process of its reception.

Alan Cadwallader then considers how the popular *Life of St Michael*, the *archistrategos* of Chonai, narrates the defence of a sacred healing spring in an escalating drama of protection and vindication that left an indelible mark on the landscape. Visions are shown to play a large part in keeping holy remembrance alive. The *Life* passed through several versions between the 4th and 9th centuries. Topographical features provided pilgrims with a striking testimony from nature to the truth of the supernatural story. The reception of the popular narrative of the archangel's establishment of the spring was troubled by the admission that both Christians and pagans enjoyed the benefits of the therapeutic waters. This tension is clearly expressed in the various attempts to authenticate the origins of the site—from apostolic promise to a foundation story more familiar from earlier Greek pagan myths of springs, groves, shrines or temples. The story attempts to compensate for its pagan origins by hesitating over the exact nature of the initiating encounter and by strengthening its orthodox Christian pedigree. In both cases the narrative is not completely

successful, and yet we are left with a story that enabled a rural sanctuary, just outside of Colossae, to make the transition from pagan to Christian devotion.

Our last two chapters are devoted to hymns. In Chapter 15, Andrew Mellas observes that dreams are often treated with disdain in Byzantine liturgical hymns. For example, Andrew of Crete's *Great Kanon*, composed in the 8th century, exhorts the congregation to weep at night before their days vanish "like a dream on waking." Following the incarnation of the Logos in history, it could be argued that dreams served little purpose. The mystagogy of the Byzantine liturgy and its hymnography, however, invited the faithful to experience a vision of history that unfolded in the liminal space between Christ's crucifixion and resurrection. Liturgical hymns such as the *Great Kanon* became an eschatological drama. Liturgical memory interpreted the events of salvation not through the prism of history but as realities that become present as part of the mystery of worship. Mellas explores how biblical figures and events from the past and the future are interwoven in liturgical time and space as a kind of mystical dream.

The final chapter, Derek Krueger's analysis of hymns by Symeon the New Theologian celebrating divine love in erotic terms, contrasts sharply with Chapter 1 on the early eastern monastic struggle with erotic dreams. The two chapters show how much monastic perceptions of dreams had changed since the 4th century. Far from being seen as a problem, as in the sources discussed in Chapter 1, erotic fantasies were embraced in the eleventh-century hymns of Symeon when they were directed towards the divine in the person of Jesus Christ. In his *Hymns on Divine Love* (*Erotes*), Symeon explored the mutual desire between God and the male monk through elaborate erotic metaphors. Many of the poems cast the monk in the role of a bride, shifting his gender, and engaging expectations of sexual activity on a wedding night. Others left the monk gendered male, thus casting the relationship between Christ and his beloved in homoerotic terms, in some cases also figuring this activity as the consummation of a marriage. The hymns employ a variety of erotic tropes of the sort known also from earlier and later romantic literature, particularly the novel. The hymns, while not necessarily evidence for actual erotic practices, offer a window on the scope of Byzantine sexual fantasy, perhaps especially male sexual fantasy. To some extent, this realm recapitulates the unequal roles of lover and beloved—whether male and female or male and male—already established in ancient and late ancient Greek literature. Rather than focusing on Symeon's sexualised spirituality, Krueger investigates the impact of the erotic imagination on Symeon's theology and self-understanding.

2 Conclusion

Taken together, these fifteen short studies show the surprising variety of Byzantine approaches to dreams, memory and imagination, their evolution over time, and the importance of paying close attention to social and literary context. Dreams, memory and imagination were important expressions of Byzantine culture, albeit subjective and unreliable manifestations and subject to manipulation. In Byzantium, everyone's dreams, memories and imaginings—especially those of emperors and their consorts—could convey meaning to the broader community. Dreams were regarded by Byzantines of every rank as a portal to another dimension. They transcended religious affiliation, appearing to adherents of the various monotheisms, dualisms and polytheisms of former Roman and Persian territories as far from Constantinople as Armenia. Thus, they were useful tools for the social and political cohesion of an empire under imperial rule for over a thousand years.

Imagination in the early monastic context was the site of a cosmic battle between good and evil for the control of fleshly desires. Personal religiosity changed over time, as we saw above in the comparison of Symeon the New Theologian's hymns with their visions of the divine as a (male) lover with the strict instructions of Evagrius or Palladius for freeing oneself from the demands of the flesh, even in dreams. Byzantine saints lived on not just in popular memory but even survived in visionary form after death. The codification of such visions in texts kept their memories alive, just as much as their representation in material form in statues, icons and other images at shrines and churches, in humble homes and imperial palaces. Their commemoration in icons, liturgy and hymns reveals remarkable continuity and was thus another anchor point for religious cohesion across a vast empire.

The reception of monastic and philophical dream theory and theories of cognition sometimes eclipsed their original formulations, as we saw in the cases of Clement of Alexandria, Nemesius of Emesa and Synesius of Cyrene, interpreters of the Platonic tradition, whose ideas were taken up and developed in later centuries. This flexible tradition of interpretation offered an inherited fund of intellectual capital for the empire's theologians and philosophers across the early, middle and late Byzantine periods, and across religious divides.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

Guidorizzi, G. (1980) *Pseudo-Niceforo. Libro dei Sogni: testo critico, introduzione, traduzione e commento* (Naples).

Oberhelman, S. M. (1991) *The Oneirocriticon of Achmet: A Medieval Greek and Arabic Treatise on the Interpretation of Dreams* (Lubbock, TX).

Oberhelman, S. M. (2008) *Dreambooks in Byzantium: Six Oneirocritica in Translation, with Commentary and Introduction* (Abingdon).

Secondary Sources

Angelidi, C. and Calofonos, G. T. (eds) (2014) *Dreaming in Byzantium and Beyond* (Farnham and Burlington, VT).

Bulkeley, K., Adams, K. and Davis, P. M. (2009) *Dreaming in Christianity and Islam: Culture, Conversion and Creativity* (Piscataway, NJ).

Calofonos, G. (2014) 'Dream Narratives in the Continuation of Theophanes', in Angelidi and Calofonos 2014, 95–123.

Gerok-Reiter, A. and Walde, C. (2012) *Traum und Vision in der Vormoderne: Traditionen, Diskussionen, Perspektiven* (Berlin).

Graf, F. (2010) 'Dreams, Visions, and Revelations: Dreams in the Thought of the Latin Fathers', in E. Scioli and C. Wade (eds) *Sub Imagine Somni: Nighttime Phenomena in Greco-Roman Culture* (Pisa), 211–231.

Harris, W. V. (2009) *Dreams and Experience in Classical Antiquity* (Cambridge, MA).

Harrisson, J. G. (2013) *Dreams and Dreaming in the Roman Empire: Cultural Memory and Imagination* (London).

MacAlister, S. (1992) 'Gender as Sign and Symbolism in Artemidorus' *Oneirocritica*: Social Aspirations and Anxieties', *Helios* 19, 140–60.

MacAlister, S. (1996) *Dreams and Suicides: the Greek Novel from Antiquity to the Byzantine Empire* (London and New York).

Magdalino, P. (2014) 'The Historiography of Dreaming in Medieval Byzantium', in Angelidi and Calofonos 2014, 125–144.

Mavroudi, M. (2002) *A Byzantine Book on Dream Interpretation: The Oneirocriticon of Achmet and its Arabic Sources*, The Medieval Mediterranean 36 (Leiden).

Mavroudi, M. (2014) 'Byzantine and Islamic Dream Interpretation: A Comparative Approach to the Problem of "Reality" vs "Literary Tradition"', in Angelidi and Calofonos 2014, 161–186.

Messis, C. (2006) 'La Construction sociale, les réalités rhétoriques et les représentations de l'identité masculine à Byzance', 2 vols. Unpublished PhD thesis (Paris).

Miller, P. C. (1994) *Dreams in Late Antiquity: Studies in the Imagination of a Culture* (Princeton, NJ).

Näf, B. (2004) *Traum und Traumdeutung im Altertum* (Darmstadt).

Neil, B. (2016) 'Studying Dream Interpretation from Early Christianity to the Rise of Islam', *Journal of Religious History* 40(1), 17–39.

Neil, B., Costache, D. and Wagner, K. (forthcoming) *Dreams, Virtue and Divine Knowledge in Early Christian Egypt* (Cambridge).

Oberhelman, S. M. (2013) *Dreams, Healing, and Medicine in Greece from Antiquity to the Present* (Farnham).

Oberhelman, S. M. (2014) 'The Dream-Key Manuals of Byzantium', in Angelidi and Calofonos 2014, 145–159.

Rosen-Zvi, I. (2011) *Demonic Desires: "Yetzer Hara" and the Problem of Evil in Late Antiquity* (Philadelphia).

Scioli, E. and Wade, C. (eds) (2010) *Sub Imagine Somni: Nighttime Phenomena in Greco-Roman Culture* (Pisa).

Weber, G. (2000) *Kaiser, Träume und Visionen in Prinzipat und Spätantike* (Stuttgart).

PART 1

Dreams, Memory and Imagination in the Byzantine Philosophical Tradition



CHAPTER 1

The Dangers of Purity: Monastic Reactions to Erotic Dreams

Inbar Graiver

Are erotic dreams products of the self's imagination and memories? Are they determined by human physiology? Or do they result from external influences? The answers that a given culture supplies to these questions shape the ways in which people in that culture react to their experiences of erotic dreams. Such reactions thus provide an important source of evidence for studying the impact of social norms on the individual psyche.[1] Accordingly, this paper seeks to probe the intersection of the social and the psychological by examining the reactions of early Byzantine monks to their experiences of erotic dreams and related phenomena, such as nocturnal emissions. Rather than focusing on the Christian discourse on erotic dreams, I propose to examine the impact of that discourse on the daily life and dreams of Christian monks.

The Freudian revolution transformed dreams into introspective tools and keys to the unconscious. Unlike Freud's *The Interpretation of Dreams*, Artemidorus' *The Interpretation of Dreams*, written in the 2nd century CE, is mostly concerned with the predictive value of dreams as keys to the future.[2] The attitude of many early Christian thinkers toward dreams reflects a major departure from that of Artemidorus, and represents the passage from ancient to modern attitudes toward dreams.[3] This shift in attitudes is a direct consequence of the radically new notion of the self that emerged in early Christianity.

New theological concerns in Christianity have resulted in a significant shift in the understanding of the human person and permitted, in the words of Guy Stroumsa, "the emergence of a newly reflexive self, that is, a subject turned back upon itself in ways unknown before".[4] It has been suggested that this new interest in the inner life of the individual is related to the emergence of the idea of the spiritually unique and self-aware individual in Christianity,[5] as well

1 For a discussion of the ways in which culture conditions such reactions, see Stewart 2004, 37–56. See, also, Stewart 2002, 181–203.

2 See Price 1986, 3.

3 See Stroumsa 1999, 205.

4 Stroumsa 1990, 26.

5 Swain 1997, 2.

© KONINKLIJKE BRILL NV, LEIDEN, 2018 | DOI:10.1163/9789004375710_003

as to the doctrine of resurrection of the body, which required a more sustained reflection on the uniqueness of the self's individual identity than ever before.[6] Whatever the case may be, the new emphasis on interiority gave rise to a new discourse on dreams, one which was distinct from other similar discourses in late antiquity.

During the patristic period, Christian theologians addressed issues surrounding erotic dreams more comprehensively than previously.[7] Within the early monastic movement, especially as it developed in Egypt during the 4th century, erotic dreams (καθ' ὕπνον φαντασία) and related phenomena became "seismographs of subjectivity" and tools for the diagnosis of the dreamer's inner disposition.[8] Erotic dreams and other expressions of sexual desire, such as nocturnal emissions (or "nocturnal movement")[9] were often seen as indicative of moral flaws,[10] whereas the ability to resist, or never incur, images that could cause erotic dreams served as a sign of spiritual and psychological health.[11]

How did this move from predictive to introspective interpretation of dreams, alongside the new emphasis on the inner life of the individual in Christianity, influence the reactions of Christian monks in the eastern Roman empire to their experiences of erotic dreams? In the first section of this paper I consider two case studies demonstrating the impact of this shift on the daily life of early Byzantine monks. In the second section I situate these case studies within the context of monastic theology, whereas in the third section I examine them in view of modern psychological literature on dreaming. In the fourth section I examine the implications of dream research for the understanding of the challenges that erotic dreams posed to early Byzantine monks. As will be shown, cognitive research on dreaming sheds new light on the nature of these

6 See Papadogiannakis 1981, 129–142. However, this does not imply that early Christianity was a religion of individuality. On this subject, see Zachhuber and Torrance 1981, 7.

7 Unlike other types of dreams, erotic dreams were infrequently discussed or theorised by ancient writers. For discussion of sexual dreams in Greco-Roman literature, see Pigeaud 1981, 10–23.

8 See Foucault 1999, 368, and Brakke 1995, 419–460.

9 ἡ κίνησις ἐν τῇ νυκτί. Nocturnal emissions were also described as "nocturnal events" (τὰ ὑπὸ νύκτα συμβαίνοντα). E.g. Barsanuphius and John, *Ep.* 169 (SC 427, 570). On the relationship between erotic dreams and nocturnal emissions in monastic thought, see Stewart 1998, 82–83 and 189.

10 Evagrius, *Praktikos* 54 (SC 171, 622).

11 E.g. Evagrius, *Praktikos* 56 (SC 171, 630): "We shall recognise the signs of dispassion (ἀπάθεια) through our thoughts (λογισμῶν) during the day and through our dreams (ἐνυπνίων) at night. And dispassion is what we shall call the soul's health" (ὑγείαν ἐροῦμεν εἶναι ψυχῆς).

challenges by providing explanatory value to certain details preserved in monastic sources that would otherwise remain incomprehensible to us. Drawing on research on the recurrence of unwanted dreams, I argue that the effort of Christian monks not to incur sexual dreams could unwittingly serve to increase their frequency and salience. This seemingly paradoxical phenomenon, I argue, is one of the risks inherent in the attempts of early Byzantine monks to implement in their own bodies and minds monastic ideals of chastity.

1 Reactions to Erotic Dreams

To reconstruct the impact of the theological discourse on erotic dreams on the reactions of Christian monks to their experiences of sexual dreams, our point of departure are two case studies drawn from the literary evidence of Egyptian monasticism, especially those depicting the common life at the monastic colonies of Lower Egypt. These specific case studies have been chosen for consideration because they provide an unusually concrete and elaborate account of these reactions, as well as of the ways in which these reactions were, in turn, judged and evaluated by monastic elders. My aim, however, is not to explain the actual historical events reported in these texts so much as to demonstrate the challenges involved in the monastic quest for chastity of both body and mind.

The first case study is drawn from the *Lausiac History* (*Historia Lausiaca*), which was written by Palladius, bishop of Helenopolis, in 419–20 and purports to record his encounters with holy men in Egypt and Palestine during the last two decades of the 4th century.[12] One of these encounters was with Moses the Ethiopian, also known as Moses the Black, a former bandit who converted and became a famous hermit and a paradigm for every soul who renounced the "blackness" of evil.[13] Moses, Palladius reports, suffered miserably from sexual dreams over a long period. When he disclosed his problem to one of the elders,

12 The authenticity of the historical framework of the *Lausiac History* has been questioned, since some of its chronological details are inconsistent. Nevertheless, the importance of the *Lausiac History* rests, not in its chronological details, but in the author's individual encounters with Egyptian holy men as historical incidents that had actually occurred. Adalbert de Vogüé and Gabriel Bunge proposed that Palladius wrote his first work in the 390s in the Egyptian desert, which later became the basis for the *Lausiac History* itself (Bunge and de Vogüé 1994). See also Bunge 1990, 78–129.

13 Moses is characterised as an ideal monk in the *Lausiac History* as well as in later sources: Sozomen's *Ecclesiastical History*, the anonymous *Apophthegmata Patrum* and the tenth-century *Acta Sanctorum*. See Wimbush 2011, 81–92. An examination of these sources suggests that "the Moses characterisation" functioned to instruct and edify those who had

asking him: "What am I to do, seeing that the dreams of my soul (τὰ ἐνύπνια τῆς ψυχῆς) darken my reason, because of my sinful habits?" the old man, in response, attributed the dreams to Moses' negligence: "Because you have not withdrawn your mind from imagining these things, that is why you endure this." Terrified by the harsh judgment, for the next six years Moses tormented himself with vigils and fasts, but the more he dried up his body, the more he was consumed by sexual dreams. It was only the performative words of Father Isidore, the priest of Scete, exempting Moses from responsibility for his "illicit pleasures", that eventually cured him: "Stop contending with demons and do not bother them … In the name of Jesus Christ, your dreams have vanished. Now receive communion confidently. You were subjected to this for your own good." From then on, Moses "no longer suffered anything".[14]

Like the *Lausiac History*, John Cassian's *Conference*s includes elaborated versions of Cassian's past conversations with various desert fathers whom he met during his stay in Egypt in the last two decades of the 4th century.[15] Book 22 of the *Conferences*, entitled *De nocturnis illusionibus* ("On nocturnal illusions"), purports to record a discourse given by an abbot named Theonas. The latter reports about a monk he had known, who over a long period (its length is not specified) "used to be sullied in his sleep by an unclean emission"[16] whenever he was preparing to receive communion (and only on such occasions!). This brother, Theonas stresses, "possessed a constant purity of heart and body due to his great watchfulness and humility and was never tried by nocturnal deceptions",[17]

---

accepted this lifestyle, and to provide a model of monastic perfection. See Wicker 1990, 329–348.

14 Palladius, *HL* 19.7–10 (ed. Bartelink 1974, 96–102): Παῦσαι φιλονεικῶν, Μωσῆ, τοῖς δαίμοσι καὶ μὴ αὐτοῖς ἐπέμβαινε … Ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ πέπαυταί σου τὰ ἐνύπνια. Κοινώνησον οὖν μετὰ παρρησίας ἵνα γὰρ μὴ καύχησῃ ὡς περιγενόμενος πάθους, τούτου χάριν κατεδυναστεύθης πρὸς τὸ συμφέρον.

15 Scholars have raised doubts with regard to Cassian's authority as a historian. Owen Chadwick, for example, demonstrated that his account of the origin of Matins is inconsistent (Chadwick 1950, 71–77), and Adalbert de Vogüé concluded that Cassian is more concerned with monastic theology than historical fact (de Vogüé 1961, 213–240). See also Guy 1966, 363–372. Nevertheless, it seems unlikely that the *Conferences* are fabrications. The moderate portraits of the *abbas* who participated in the conferences, as well as the fact that the monks to whom Cassian ascribes the teaching of the *Conferences* are not well known (as we would expect if Cassian were seeking to claim for his teaching the authority of the desert fathers), contribute to a sense of the genuine. Furthermore, the conferences include descriptions of places and of local customs, which indicate a first-hand knowledge. See Louth 2004, 379–380 and Driver 2002.

16 *Coll.* 22.6.1 (CSEL 13, 622): *inmundo fluxu dormiens foedabatur*.

17 *Coll.* 22.6.1 (CSEL 13, 621): *cum castimoniam cordis et corporis summa circumspectione atque humilitate promeritam iugiter possideret ac nequaquam nocturnis ludificationibus temptaretur*.

and yet his problem kept repeating with exceptional regularity and caused him much shame and distress. The disheartened monk held back from communion "for a long time", assuming that his emissions made him ineligible for contact with the Eucharist. Eventually he raised his problem with the elders. When they examined the cause of his "disease" (*morbus*) and were assured that "there was no guilt of either soul or body", they concluded that his emissions were caused by the devil, who wanted to humiliate him and prevent him from receiving the sacrament. Having found him morally blameless, they advised him to participate in communion. Soon afterwards, his emissions ceased.[18]

The story of this anonymous monk seems both too unique and too lifelike to be a complete invention; it has what one scholar has described as "a sense of the genuine".[19] That late antique monks were preoccupied with the problem of sexual dreams and nocturnal emissions is indicated by the frequency and the urgency of their questions on this subject, as well as by the extreme precautions that some of them took to avoid "defilement".[20] In addition to these precautions, the ascetical literature of the early monastic movement makes it clear that all those who suffered sexual temptation also fought it by restricting their diets and by denying themselves sleep, as did the monks in the two case studies described above. In both case studies, however, these practices served only to compound the problem that they were intended to solve. Another unusual fact in both case studies is the sudden and complete cessation of the erotic dreams and nocturnal emissions as soon as the monks received the sacrament. In Cassian's case study, a further oddity is the strict regularity of the nocturnal emissions—only on nights preceding the weekly communion and never on other occasions. The emissions seem to occur, paradoxically, exactly against the monk's efforts to avoid them. The elders themselves present this curious regularity as an "unusual fact".[21]

To make sense of these intriguing case studies, in the next section I situate them within the context of monastic theology and its belief in the ability to control sexual thoughts and urges.

18 *Coll.* 22.6.2–4 (CSEL 13, 621–23).

19 Trans. Ramsey 2000, 9.

20 Cassian refers to the practice of wearing cold metal plates around the genitals to avoid nocturnal emissions (*Inst.* 6.7.2 [SC 109, 272]). See also *Apophth. Patr.* N 517 (Wortley 2013, 351). Although Columba Stewart argues that Cassian refers here to the costume of Greek athletes rather than to monks (Stewart 1998, 189), Cassian does seem to recommend this practice. See Brakke 1995b, 95; Wei 2012, 371. For other measures employed to avoid nocturnal emissions, see Rousselle 1988, 151; Metteer 2008, 20–24.

21 *Coll.* 22.6.2 (CSEL 13, 622): *specialis exceptio.*

2 "Within our Power": The Ability to Control Erotic Dreams

As already noted, erotic dreams and nocturnal emissions served in Christian monasticism as tools for diagnosing the dreamer's inner disposition. For the present purposes it is important to note that erotic dreams could fulfill this function because they were thought to be potentially controllable. In assuming that sexual urges could be brought under voluntary control, despite their seemingly unconquerable force, Cassian and Palladius followed the Alexandrian theologians. Clement of Alexandria, writing at the end of the 2nd century, teaches that the "overwhelming impulses" (ὁρμή) of the body are "acts of the will" (τὰ ἑκούσια) which are in our control or "within our power" (ἐφ' ἡμῖν) and hence subject to moral judgment.[22] According to Clement, we are responsible for impulses which lead to lustful deeds, because we do not restrain ourselves.[23] In this view, spiritual perfection entails full responsibility for one's urges and desires. In the 4th century, Antony the Great reflects a similar view when he teaches that even the natural and inherent inner movement of the body "does not operate unless the soul consents, otherwise it remains still".[24] Following these writers, Cassian teaches that the inner motions of the body require the soul's "consent".[25]

The notion of the soul's consent is related to an understanding of human cognition which the desert fathers inherited from Origen, who himself was heavily influenced by the Stoic theory of assent to mental representations. In this view, all human beings are subject to mental images or representations (φαντασίαι). Every representation has a propositional content which can be either true or false, and humans are free to give or withhold their assent to these propositions.[26] Basing himself on the Stoic theory, Origen taught that it is "within our power" (ἐφ' ἡμῖν / *in nostra potestate*) to either assent to or dissent from representations.[27] Whether we merit praise or blame depends upon

22 Clement, *Str.* 2.13.59.6–2.14.60.1–7 (SC 38, 82–83). More broadly, in Hellenistic medical literature nocturnal emissions were linked with a loss of rational control, and their immediate cause was considered to be a *phantasia*, a dream image. See Refoulé 1961, 488.

23 Clement, *Str.* 7.16.98–99 (SC 428, 296–98).

24 Antony, *Ep.* 1 (Rubenson 1995, 199; PG 40, 979): *non operatur aut aliquid sine animae voluntate*.

25 Cassian, *Inst.* 6.2 (SC 109, 264).

26 On the Stoic theory, see Graver 2007, 24–27.

27 E.g. "Those things which happen to us from without are not in our own power (οὐκ ἐφ' ἡμῖν); but to make a good or bad use of those things which do so happen … is within our power" (Origen *princ.* 3.1.5; PG 11, 256). While Origen relied heavily on the Stoic theory of representations, there is an important difference: whereas the Stoics were interested in the truth-value of the representations, Origen and Evagrius are interested in their role as

whether we give or withhold our assent to representations that produce an impulse towards good or bad action.

Following Origen's adaptation of the Stoic theory, Evagrius teaches that our mental content is ultimately up to us: it is "within our power" (ἐφ᾽ ἡμῖν) to determine whether tempting thoughts linger and so set the passions in motion.[28] Describing the complex psychological process through which a sinful thought gradually develops into sin in action, he explains: "The monk's temptation is in the form of a thought which rises up through the passionate part of the soul and darkens the mind. The monk's sin is his consenting to the forbidden pleasure of a thought."[29] This understanding was widespread among the desert monks.[30] In this view, temptation begins with suggestion in thought. If the thought is allowed to persist, it leads the monk from thinking about sin to actually performing it. Hence, Evagrius warns that "if the mind consents to sinful thoughts it draws near to sin".[31] This account of temptation blurs the distinction between having bad thoughts and acting on bad thoughts.

Egyptian monks were expected to take responsibility not only for their actions but also for their inward response to their mental content. Moreover, the principal obstacle for them lay not in the commission of external sin, but in the slippery thoughts of their own minds.[32] As Mark the Monk explained in the 5th century:

---

an indication of moral disposition. See Foucault 1993, 217. See also Gibbons 2011, 118, and Brakke 2006, 40.

28 Evagrius, *Praktikos* 6 (SC 171, 508); cf. *Praktikos* 80 (SC 171, 668); *Apophth. Patr*. sys. 11.107 (SC 474, 192).

29 Evagrius, *Praktikos* 74–75 (SC 171, 662): Πειρασμός ἐστι μοναχοῦ λογισμὸς διὰ τοῦ παθητικοῦ μέρους τῆς ψυχῆς ἀναβὰς καὶ σκοτίζων τὸν νοῦν. Ἁμαρτία ἐστὶ μοναχοῦ ἡ πρὸς τὴν ἀπηγορευμένην ἡδονὴν τοῦ λογισμοῦ συγκατάθεσις.

30 E.g. *Apophth. Patr.* alph. Poemen 28 (PG 65, 329). See also Poemen 15, 20, 21, 88, and 89.

31 Evagrius, *ep.* 25.2 (trans. Bunge 1986, 236): τὸν νοῦν … εἰ συγκατατίθεται ἐν τῇ διανοίᾳ μετακλίνουσιν ἀυτὸν πρὸς τὴν ἁμαρτίαν. Hesychius the Priest offers a fuller account of the complex psychological process by which a tempting thought gradually develops into sin in action: "The provocation comes first, then … the mingling of our thoughts with those of the wicked demons. Third comes our assent to the provocation, with both sets of intermingling thoughts contriving how to commit the sin in practice. Fourth comes the concrete action—that is, the sin itself." Ἐστι πρῶτον προσβολή, δεύτερον … ἀναμὶξ γινόμενοι οἱ ἡμῶν καὶ τῶν πονηρῶν δαιμόνων λογισμοί. τρίτον συγκατάθεσις δεῖ γενέσθαι μεταξὺ τῶν ἀμφοτέρων λογισμῶν βουλευομένων κακῶς. τέταρτον δέ ἐστιν ἡ αἰσθητὸς πρᾶξις, ἤγουν ἡ ἁμαρτία (*On Watchfulness and Holiness* 46; PG 93, 1496; trans. Palmer, Sherrard and Ware, 170); cf. *On Watchfulness and Holiness* 2 (PG 93, 1481).

32 See Chadwick 1950, 140.

> αἰτία ἐστιν οἱ ἑκάστου λογισμοί. Εἶχον δὲ εἰπεῖν, ὅτι καὶ οἱ λόγοι καὶ αἱ πράξεις. Ἐπειδὴ δὲ πρὸ ἐννοίας ταῦτα οὐ προέρχονται, τούτου χάριν τὸ πᾶν τοῖς λογισμοῖς ἐπιγράφοιμι. Τοῦ λογισμοῦ οὖν προηγουμένου, λοιπὸν οἱ λόγοι καὶ αἱ πράξεις παρέχουσιν ἡμῖν τὴν εἰς ἀλλήλους κοινωνίαν.
>
> The cause of everything that happens to a person is something that person has thought. I ought to have said that this includes both words and deeds, but since these do not precede thought, I attribute everything to thoughts. With thought leading the way, words and deeds follow.[33]

Since control of bodily functions begins with control of thoughts, by regulating the experiences that precede sleep the monk can (at least ideally) control his dreams at night. Cassian reflects this view when he argues that wet dreams can be fostered by "feasting on harmful thoughts all day long".[34] He further explains that "when the mind is empty of spiritual pursuits and practices … then it leads astray the person who is draped in laziness … or else it lusts after bits of impure thoughts".[35] As a result of such negligence, he continues,

> *consequenter eueniet, ut non solum multimoda cogitationum peruagatio inuerecunde atque procaciter secretum mentis inrumpat, sed etiam pristinarum omnium passionum intra eam semina perseuerent. quae quam dia in eius adytis delitescunt, quamuis rigido corpus ieiunio castigetur, tamen nihilominus dormientem inlecebrosis phantasmatibus inquietant, quibus ante legitimi temporis cursum.*
>
> [It] consequently happens that not only do numerous roving thoughts break into the hidden places of the mind in bold and impudent fashion, but also the seeds of all one's former passions remain there … As a result of them the vile moisture is expelled before its customary time.[36]

---

33 Mark the Monk, *Disputatio cum causidico* 18 (SC 455, 80).

34 Cassian, *Inst.* 10.11 (SC 109, 404); cf. *Inst.* 6.7–11 (SC 109, 130–134); *Apophth. Patr.* N 592.45 (Wortley 2013, 418).

35 Cassian, *Coll.* 22.3.4 (CSEL 13, 617–618): *si mens spiritalibus studiis atque exercitiis uacuata nec disciplinis intefioris hominis instituta quendam sibi segnitiae situm per consuetudinem continui torporis obduxerit, aut cum sordidarum cogitationum minutias non cauendo ita illam cordis sublimissimam puritatem segniter concupiscit.*

36 Cassian, *Coll.* 22.3.4–5 (CSEL 13, 617–618; trans. Ramsey 1997, 764). The view that dreams are fostered by one's mental content in waking-life ultimately goes back to Aristotle, who taught that what the soul sees during sleep are "appearances" (*phantasmata*) and "residual movements" deriving from sense impressions perceived when the soul was awake (*insomn.* 461a18–20). For a discussion, see Miller 1994, 43.

In the 7th century John Climacus gave voice to this widespread belief when he wrote that "a sign of complete sensuality is to be liable to emissions from bad thoughts when one is awake".[37] In this view, the root problem in erotic dreams and nocturnal emissions does not lie in the body, but ultimately in the mind's failure to exercise control over the body by controlling its thoughts. Accordingly, Cassian advises that "the first thing to be done" to avoid erotic dreams is "to restrain our wandering thoughts".[38] Climacus echoes this view when he teaches that "the beginning of chastity is refusal to consent to an evil thought".[39]

Christian monks were encouraged to regulate their dreams at night by controlling their thoughts during the daytime. A better understanding of how this cognitive process actually works—as well as the ways in which it can go wrong—can help us make more accurate hypotheses about the intriguing case studies cited above and, more generally, about the challenges involved in the monastic quest for purity of both body and mind. Accordingly, the next section describes the cognitive mechanisms involved in attention regulation and their relation to dream occurrence. Rather than ignoring the monastic theory of dreams or replacing it with Western theories of dreaming, I draw on the latter in order to understand how the monastic theory influenced the reactions of Christian monks to their experiences of erotic dreams.

3 Dream Rebound

In Freud's theory of dreams, dreams potentially communicated forbidden wishes and desires of the unconscious. Modern dream research has confirmed some of Freud's views, but not others. While dream contents indeed appear to be indicative of the dreamer's psychological disposition, many dream researchers now think that there is no need to postulate an unconscious storage system of repressed wishes.[40] Rather, the empirical literature in the field of dream research largely supports the so-called "Continuity Hypothesis of Dreaming", which states that dreams largely reflect waking-life thoughts and experiences. Several studies have demonstrated, for example, that inter-individual

37 Climacus, *Scal.* 15 (PG 88, 881).

38 Cassian, *Coll.* 22.3.5 (CSEL 13, 618).

39 Climacus, *Scal.* 15 (PG 88, 881A): Ἀρχὴ μὲν ἁγνείας ἀσυγκατάθετος λογισμός.

40 Calvin Hall was the first dream researcher to argue that some contents of dreams reflected the daily concerns and ideas of the dreamers rather than the hidden libidinal wishes or compensatory emotional strategies that psychodynamic theorists like Freud and Jung advocated. See Hall 1953, 34–38.

differences in the amount of time spent with specific waking-life thoughts are reflected in dream content.[41] In particular, research on erotic dreams and their relationship to waking-life demonstrates that the frequency of erotic dreams is related to the amount of time spent with sexual thoughts in waking life (but not to a greater amount of time spent in sexual activities).[42]

Not only do dreams contain "day residue", namely, direct echoes of prior waking experience, but they also include a residue of thoughts that have been intentionally suppressed during waking hours. Suppression, namely, the act of deliberately stopping oneself from thinking certain thoughts, is a vital psychological mechanism: since concentrating on item A depends on suppressed attention to all items that are not A, every act of concentration necessarily involves a simultaneous act of suppression. Unlike Freud's concept of repression, which is unconscious and automatic (and hence involves a denial of the existence of the repressed element), suppression involves an intentional, conscious choice not to indulge a thought, feeling, or action. This capacity is important to human survival and adaptation. Suppression is also a common way of dealing with unpleasant or distressing thoughts and emotions.[43]

Although most individuals are able to achieve satisfactory levels of mental control in most circumstances, our ability to control our thoughts is far from perfect. The paradoxical outcome of thought suppression was first demonstrated experimentally by psychologist Daniel Wegner in 1987.[44] His findings show that this strategy of mental control can sometimes backfire, producing not only a failure of control but also the very mental states it is meant to avoid. It turns out that trying not to think a thought may only make it come back stronger.

Wegner's "Ironic Process Theory" attempts to explain this phenomenon. The theory assumes that each instance of mental control is implemented through the production of two processes: an intentional, operating process that searches for mental content yielding the desired state, and a monitoring process that searches for mental content signaling the failure to achieve the desired state. The intentional process is susceptible to interference from distraction, and the monitoring process is designed to keep track of this. It searches for failures of control by examining pre-conscious mental content, and when items indicating failed control are found, it restarts the operating process.[45]

---

41 E.g. Lauer, Riemann, Lund et al. 1987; Bernstein and Roberts 1995.

42 Schredl, Desch, Röming et al. 2009, 38–43.

43 This account is based mainly on Wegner 1988 and 1992, as well as Purdon and Clark 2002, 29–43.

44 Wegner et al. 1987, 5–13.

45 Wegner 1997, 295–315.

The watchfulness of the monitor, however, is also a source of "ironic effects". Because the monitor searches for potential mental contents that signal failed control, it increases the accessibility of this content to consciousness. If the intentional process of attention is undermined by other processes that also consume cognitive resources (such as stress, anxiety, or fatigue), the monitoring process can yield increased mind wandering.[46] In the same vein, trying *not* to think about something can increase the accessibility of that target to consciousness under conditions of cognitive load. According to the "Ironic Process Theory", when we try to suppress a thought, the monitoring process searches for this target because it is its appearance that indicates failed control. In other words, the monitor is aimed at a cue that serves as a constant reminder of the suppressed material, thereby increasing its accessibility to consciousness.

Stress and anxiety thus promote mental control lapses that are not random. Furthermore, because the very effort to eject unwanted thoughts can strengthen their power, suppressed thoughts seem to acquire a force of their own: the more one tries to suppress them, they return with greater insistence. As a result, "there is a certain predictability to unwanted thoughts, a grim precision in the way our mental clockwork returns such thoughts to mind each time we try to suppress them".[47] Attempts to influence mental states can thus act in a direction precisely opposite the intended control. The "unwanting" itself promotes this problem.

Not only does anxiety produce increased susceptibility to suppression lapses, but the context or environment in which suppression takes place can also serve to compound the problem. Studies by Wegner and others have shown that if the individual remains in the suppression environment, he or she is more inclined to experience a rebound of preoccupation with the unwanted thought. According to Wegner, when people try to suppress a thought, environmental features are often used as distractors, which in time can become powerful reminders of the unwanted thought.[48]

In particular, suppression is difficult to execute when thoughts about sex are concerned, since these thoughts quickly excite our bodies by producing sympathetic arousal of the autonomic nervous system. Wegner has found that when people are asked to suppress sexual thoughts, their skin conductance level (SCL) reactivity rivals the strength of reactions that occur when they are

46 See Rachman 1981, 92.
47 Wenzlaff and Wegner 2000, 60.
48 Wegner et al. 1991, 150.

asked explicitly to entertain those thoughts.[49] Trying not to think about sex can thus excite the body just like thinking about sex.

Suppressed thoughts might also recur in dreams. Wegner and colleagues conducted a study into the effects of thought suppression on dream content, which tested whether instructed thought suppression would orient dream content to the suppressed thought. Their study clearly demonstrated that pre-sleep instructions to suppress thinking about a person result in increased dreaming about that person.[50] These findings, which were replicated and extended in more recent studies,[51] suggest that the enhanced accessibility of thoughts that results from their suppression transfers even to dreams. This phenomenon is known as "dream rebound". Wegner and his colleagues interpret the rebound of suppressed thoughts in dreams in terms of the influence of changes in brain activation during REM sleep, which increase the accessibility of the suppressed material.

The thought suppression paradigm provides a useful means to elucidate the ways in which our thoughts and cognitive strategies during wake influence our dreams. This influence has important implications for the understanding of early monastic accounts of the recurrence of sexual thoughts and dreams.

4 Connecting the Dots

Geoffrey Harpham famously argued that "the broadest description of the project of asceticism is that it recognises and manages drive or impulse, commonly called desire, by harnessing and directing resistance".[52] Harpham's notion of resistance to desire assumes Freud's idea of (unconscious) repression. Getting clear evidence of repression, however, is difficult, especially in historical retrospect. On the other hand, in so far as suppressive strategies can be seen as the embodiment of beliefs about the need to control thoughts, which themselves derive from changing social ideas of self-control, suppression is a psychological process that can be identified and studied by historians and anthropologists. By talking about suppression rather than repression, therefore, we are in a better position to study the intricate, often paradoxical relationship between desire and resistance. While it is true, as Kallistos Ware argues, that the Greek fathers were advocating "not repression but transfiguration", and that the aim

49 See Wegner et al. 1990, 409–418. See also Wegner 1992.

50 See Wegner, Wenzlaff, Kozak 2004, 232–236.

51 E.g. Taylor and Bryant 2007, 163–8; Bryant, Wyzenbeek, Weinstein 2011, 515–522.

52 Harpham 1987, 61.

of the ascetic was not to suppress the passions but to reorient them,[53] yet suppression may have been a common way of dealing with sexual thoughts.

The paradoxical effects of resistance to desire, I suggest, may account for the exceptional regularity of the nocturnal emissions of the anonymous monk in Cassian's case study: this monk may have simply struggled too hard to "exercise the most cautious watchfulness lest the integrity of flesh that we had preserved up to that time be snatched away, especially on the night that we are preparing ourselves for the communion of the saving banquet", just as he was instructed.[54] Yet his very effort not to think about sex—a tense and anxious effort, we may presume—may have unwittingly contributed to the development and maintenance of his problem. The ascetic practice of sleep deprivation and the unchanging environment of the monastic cell—the "privileged place for the monk"[55]—would have served to further compound this problem. Yet the research cited above also helps us recognise that the strange problem described in Cassian's case study is, in fact, not so strange; it is but one expression or symptom of the risks involved in the attempt of early Byzantine monks to purify their mind and imagination. When conducted under conditions of anxiety and fatigue, this attempt was likely to fail, resulting in increased preoccupation with the suppressed material—which, in turn, could transfer into dreams.

As we have seen, monastic elders appear to have been well aware of the deleterious effects of anxiety. Research on the cognitive mechanisms involved in dream rebound helps us to appreciate their observational skills. In both case studies cited above, the elders were able to prompt an immediate and lasting cure by exempting the monk from responsibility for his "disease" and allowing him to partake in communion, thereby assuaging his anxiety (whether by natural or super-natural means). The findings cited above help us to appreciate both the simplicity and the sophistication of this powerful therapy, in which spiritual fathers were able to induce an immediate and lasting cure, after years

53 Ware 1998, 12. Indeed, Cassian explicitly warns that "if we retire to solitude or secret places without our faults being first cured, their operation is but repressed (*reprimatur*), while the power of feeling them is not extinguished (*exstinguatur*)" (*si ad soliludinem vel ad abdita loca nondum curatis vitiis secedam effectus eorum tantummodo reprimatur, non exstinguatur affectus*; *Coll.* 19.12 [CSEL 13, 545]; cf. *Coll.* 2.10 [CSEL 13, 48]).

54 Cassian, *Coll.* 22.5.1 (CSEL 13, 620; trans. Ramsey 1997, 766).

55 Burton-Christie 1993, 55. On the value of cell-sitting, see Evagrius, *Praktikos* 28 (SC 171, 564); *Apophth. Patr.* sys. 2.1 (SC 387, 124). As already Seneca wrote to Lucilius: "I do not like you to change your headquarters and scurry about from one place to another … Such frequent flitting means an unsteady spirit" (*Mutare te loca et aliunde alio transilire nolo … quia tam frequens migratio instabilis animi est*; *ep.* 69; trans. Gummere 1917, 53).

of futile struggle, by relieving their disciples' anxiety. Thereby they were able to undo the potentially harsh psychological implications of the radical sense of responsibility for one's thoughts and dreams promoted by monastic theology.

Both the counter-productive reaction of Christian monks to their erotic dreams as well as the therapeutic procedures designed to solve this problem demonstrate the complex and sometimes paradoxical ways in which religion shaped the lives and experiences of the early monks. On the one hand, it appears that the increased emphasis on interiority and the conflation of thinking and doing in Christian theology, alongside the monastic ideal of purity of both body and mind, gave rise to anxious and hence counter-productive attempts to suppress sexual or otherwise unwanted thoughts and urges. Yet monastic asceticism also provided therapies that were powerful enough to heal the anxiety and undo its deleterious effects. Cognitive research on the recurrence of unwanted thoughts and dreams thus enables us to reconstruct from monastic sources some aspects of the lives of early Byzantine monks that would otherwise remain inaccessible.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

Antony the Great (1995) *Letters*. PG 40, 977–1000. Ed. S. Rubenson, *The Letters of St. Antony: Monasticism and the Making of a Saint*. Studies in Antiquity and Christianity (Minneapolis).

Apophthegmata Patrum. Anonymous collection (1907) Ed. F. Nau, 'Histoires des solitaires chrétien', *Revue d'orient chrétien* 12: 48–68, 171–181, 393–404; 13 (1908): 47–57, 266–283; 14 (1909): 357–379; 17 (1912): 204–211, 294–301; 18 (1913): 137–146. Trans. J. Wortley (2013) *The Anonymous Sayings of the Desert Fathers: A Select Edition and Complete English Translation* (Cambridge).

Apophthegmata Patrum. Greek alphabetical collection (1677) Ed. J. B. Cotelier, *Ecclesiae Graecae Monumenta* 1 (Paris). Reprinted in PG 65, 72–440. Trans. B. Ward (1975) *The Sayings of the Desert Fathers: The Alphabetical Collection*, Cistercian Studies 59 (Kalamazoo).

Apophthegmata Patrum. Systematic collection (1993–2005) Ed. and trans. J.-C. Guy, *Les Apophtegmes des Pères: collection systèmatique*, 3 vols, SC 387, 474, 498 (Paris).

Aristotle (2003) *De insomniis.* Ed. and trans. L. Repici, *Il sonno e i sogni* (Venice).

Barsanuphius and John (1997–2002) *Quaestiones et Responsiones*. Eds F. Neyt, P. de Angelis-Noah and L. Regnault, *Barsanuphe et Jean de Gaza: Correspondance*, 5 vols, SC 426–427, 450–451, 468 (Paris). Trans. J. Chryssavgis (2006–2007) *Barsanuphius and John. Letters*, 2 vols, FC 113–114 (Washington, DC).

Cassian, John (1965) *De institutis coenobiorum*. Ed. and trans. J.-C. Guy, *Institutions cénobitiques*, SC 109 (Paris). Trans. B. Ramsey (2000) *John Cassian: The Institutes* (New York).

Cassian, John (2004) *Collationes*. Ed. M. Petschenig, CSEL 13 (Vienna). Trans. B. Ramsey (1997) *John Cassian: The Conferences* (New York).

Clement of Alexandria (1905–1939) *Stromateis.* Eds O. Stählin, L. Früchtel and U. Treu, 4 vols GCS (Leipzig).

Clement of Alexandria (1951–2001) *Stromata*. Ed. C. Mondesert (bks 1–2), Ed. A. Van den Hoek (bk. 4), Ed. A. le Boulluec (bks. 5 and 7), Ed. P. Descourtieux (bk. 6) *Clement d'Alexandrie. Les Stromates*. 8 vols, SC 30, 38, 278–279, 428, 446, 463 (Paris). Trans. A. Roberts and J. Donaldson (2004) *Fathers of the Second Century: Hermas, Tatian, Athenagoras, Theophilus, and Clement of Alexandria*, ANF 2 (Grand Rapids, MI).

Climacus, John (1633) *Scala Paradisi.* Ed. M. Raderus, *Sancti patris nostri Ioannis Scholastici abbatis Montis Sina, qui vulgo Climacus appellatur opera omnia* (Paris). Reprinted in PG 88, 624A–1164D. Trans. C. Luibheid and N. Russell (1982) *The Ladder of Divine Ascent* (New Jersey).

Evagrius Ponticus (1912) *Epistulae lxii*. Ed. W. Frankenberg, *Evagrius Ponticus, Epistulae lxii*. Abhandlungen der königlichen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen, Phil.-hist. Klasse, Neue Folge 13.2 (Berlin), 554–634. Trans. G. Bunge (1986) *Evagrios Pontikos: Briefe aus der Wüste*. (Trier).

Evagrius Ponticus (1971) *Praktikos.* Eds A. and C. Guillaumont, *Évagre le Pontique. Traité Pratique ou Le Moine*. SC 170 (Introduction), 171 (text) (Paris). Trans. R. E. Sinkewicz (2003) *Evagrius of Pontus: The Greek Ascetic Corpus* (Oxford), 95–114.

Hesychius the Priest. *On Watchfulness and Holiness*. PG 93, 1480–1544. Trans. G. E. H. Palmer, P. Sherrard and K. Ware (1979) in *The Philokalia*, vol. 1 (London), 162–198.

Mark the Monk (1999–2000) *De his qui putant se ex operibus justificari. De baptismo. Disputatio cum causidico.* Ed. G.-M. de Durand, *Marc Le Moine. Traités*, 2 vols. SC 445 and 455 (Paris). Trans. T. Vivian and A. Casiday (2009) *Counsels on the Spiritual Life*. Popular Patristics (New York).

Origen (1978–1984) *De principiis*. Eds H. Crouzel and M. Simonetti, *Traité des principes*, SC 252–253, 268–269, 312 (Paris). Trans. A. Cleveland Coxe (1885) *Fathers of the Third Century*, ANF 4 (Edinburgh).

Palladius (1974) *Historia Lausiaca*. Ed. G. J. M. Bartelink, *Palladio. La storia Lausiaca* (Milan). Ed. and trans. C. Butler (1898–1904) *The Lausiac History of Palladius: A Critical Discussion, together with Notes on Early Egyptian Monasticism*, 2 vols. Texts and Studies 6 (Cambridge). Trans. R. T. Meyer (1964) *Palladius: The Lausiac History*. Ancient Christian Writers 34 (New York).

Seneca (1965) *Ad Lucilium Epistulae Morales.* Ed. L. D. Reynolds, Oxford Classical Texts (Oxford). Trans. R. M. Gummere (1917) *Seneca. Ad Lucilium Epistulae Morales* (New York).

Secondary Sources

Bernstein, D. M. and Roberts B. (1995) 'Assessing Dreams Through Self-report Questionnaires: Relations with Past Research and Personality', *Dreaming* 5/1, 13–27.

Brakke, D. (1995) 'The Problematization of Nocturnal Emissions in Early Christian Syria, Egypt, and Gaul', *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 3, 419–460.

Brakke, D. (1995b) *Athanasius and the Politics of Asceticism* (Oxford).

Brakke, D. (2006) *Demons and the Making of the Monk: Spiritual Combat in Early Christianity* (Cambridge, MA).

Bryant, R., Wyzenbeek, M. and Weinstein, J. (2011) 'Dream Rebound of Suppressed Emotional Thoughts: The Influence of Cognitive Load', *Consciousness and Cognition* 20/3, 515–522.

Bunge, G. (1990) 'Palladiana I: Introduction aux fragments coptes de l'Histoire Lausiaque', *Studia Monastica* 32, 78–129.

Bunge, G. and de Vogüé, A. (1994) *Quatres ermites égyptiens d'après les fragments coptes de l'Histoire Lausiaque* (Bégrolles en Mauges).

Burton-Christie, D. (1993) *The Word in the Desert: Scripture and the Quest for Holiness in Early Christian Monasticism* (New York).

Chadwick, O. (1950) *John Cassian: A Study in Primitive Monasticism* (Cambridge).

Driver, S. (2002) *John Cassian and the Reading of Egyptian Monastic Culture* (New York).

Foucault, M. (1993) 'About the Beginning of the Hermeneutics of the Self: Two Lectures at Dartmouth', *Political Theory* 21/2, 198–227.

Foucault, M. (1999) 'Sexuality and solitude', in J. Carrette (ed.) *Religion and Culture* (New York), 365–372.

Gibbons, K. (2011) 'Vice and Self-Examination in the Christian Desert', Unpublished PhD thesis (Toronto).

Graver, M. R. (2007) *Stoicism and Emotion* (Chicago).

Guy, J. C. (1966) 'Jean Cassien, historien du monachisme égyptien?', *Studia Patristica* 8/2, 363–372.

Hall, C. S. (1953) 'What Dreams Tell Us About Man', *Pastoral Psychology* 3/10, 34–38.

Harpham, G. G. (1987) *The Ascetic Imperative in Culture and Criticism* (Chicago).

Lauer, C., Riemann D., Lund R., and Berger M. (1987) 'Shortened REM Latency: Consequence of Psychological Strain?', *Psychophysiology* 24/3, 263–271.

Louth, A. (2004) 'The Literature of the Monastic Movement', in F. Young, L. Ayres, and A. Louth (eds) *The Cambridge History of Early Christian Literature* (Cambridge), 373–381.

Metteer, C. J. (2008) 'Distraction or Spiritual Discipline: The Role of Sleep in Egyptian Monasticism', *St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 52/1, 5–43.

Miller, P. C. (1994) *Dreams in Late Antiquity: Studies in the Imagination of a Culture* (Princeton).

Papadogiannakis, Y. (1981) 'Individuality and the Resurrection in Some Late Antique Texts', in J. Zachhuber and A. Torrance (eds) *Individuality in Late Antiquity* (Burlington), 129–142.

Pigeaud, J. (1981) 'Le rêve érotique dans l'Antiquité gréco-romaine: l'oneirogmos', in P. Mudry and J. Pigeaud (eds) *Littérature, Médecine, Société* (Nantes), 10–23.

Price, S. (1986) 'The Future of Dreams: From Freud to Artemidorus', *Past & Present* 113, 3–37.

Purdon, C. and Clark, D. A. (2002) 'The Need to Control Thoughts', in R. Frost and G. Steketee (eds) *Cognitive Approaches to Obsessions and Compulsions* (Oxford), 29–43.

Rachman, S. (1981) 'Part I. Unwanted Intrusive Cognitions', *Advances in Behavior Research and Therapy* 3/3, 89–99.

Refoulé, F. (1961) 'Rêves et vie spirituelle d'apres Évagre le Pontique', *Vie spirituelle supplemente* 56, 470–516.

Rousselle, A. (1988) *Porneia: On Desire and the Body in Antiquity.* Trans. Felicia Pheasant (Oxford).

Schredl, M., Desch, S., Röming, F. and Spachmann, A. (2009) 'Erotic Dreams and their Relationship to Waking-Life Sexuality', *Sexologies* 18/1, 38–43.

Stewart, C. (1998) *Cassian the Monk*, Oxford Studies in Historical Theology (New York).

Stewart, C. (2002) 'Repression in Antiquity?', *Psychoanalytische Perspektieven* 20/2, 181–203.

Stewart, C. (2004) 'Dreams and Desires in Ancient and Early Christian Thought', in D. Pick and L. Roper (eds) *Dreams and History* (New York), 37–56.

Stroumsa, G. (1990) '*Caro salutis cardo*: Shaping the Person in Early Christian Thought', *History of Religions* 30/1, 25–50.

Stroumsa, G. (1999) 'Dreams and Visions in Early Christian Discourse', in G. G. Stroumsa and D. Shulman (eds) *Dream Cultures: Explorations in the Comparative History of Dreaming* (Oxford), 189–212.

Swain, S. (1997) 'Biography and Biographic in the Literature of the Roman Empire', in M. Edwards and S. Swain (eds) *Portraits: Biographical Representation in the Greek and Latin Literature of the Roman Empire* (Oxford), 1–38.

Taylor, F. and Bryant, R. (2007) 'The Tendency to Suppress, Inhibiting Thoughts, and Dream Rebound', *Behaviour Research and Therapy* 45/1, 163–168.

de Vogüé, A. (1961) 'Monachisme et église dans la pensée de Cassien', in *Théologie de la vie monastique: études sur la tradition patristique* (Paris), 213–240.

Ware, K. (1998) 'The Way of the Ascetics: Negative or Affirmative?', in V. L. Wimbush and R. Valantasis (eds) *Asceticism* (New York), 3–15.

Wegner, M. (1988) 'Stress and Mental Control', in S. Fisher and J. Reason (eds) *Handbook of Life Stress, Cognition, and Health* (Oxford), 685–699.

Wegner, M. (1992) 'You Can't Always Think What You Want', *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology* 25, 193–225.

Wegner, M. (1997) 'Why the Mind Wanders', in J. Cohen and J. Schooler (eds) *Scientific Approaches to Consciousness* (New Jersey), 295–315.

Wegner, D., Schneider, D. J., Carter, S. R. and White, T. L. (1987) 'Paradoxical Effects of Thought Suppression', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 53/1, 5–13.

Wegner, D., Schneider, D. J., Knutson, B. and McMahon, S. (1991) 'Polluting the Stream of Consciousness: The Effect of Thought Suppression on the Mind's Environment', *Cognitive Therapy and Research* 15/2, 141–152.

Wegner, D., Shortt, J. W., Blake, A. W. and Page, M. S. (1990) 'The Suppression of Exciting Thoughts', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 58/3, 409–418.

Wegner, D., Wenzlaff, R. and Kozak, M. (2004) 'Dream Rebound: The Return of Suppressed Thoughts in Dreams', *Psychological Science* 15, 232–236.

Wei, L.-Y. (2012) 'The Absence of Sin in Sexual Dreams in the Writings of Augustine and Cassian', *Vigiliae Christianae* 66/4, 362–378.

Wenzlaff, R. and Wegner, D. (2000) 'Thought Suppression', *Annual Review of Psychology* 51/1, 59–91.

Wicker, K. O. (1990) 'Ethiopian Moses (Collected Sources)', in V. L. Wimbush (ed.) *Ascetic Behavior in Greco-Roman Antiquity: A Source Book* (Minneapolis), 329–348.

Wimbush, V. L. (2011) 'Ascetic Behavior and Colorful Language: Stories about Ethiopian Moses', *Semeia* 58, 81–92.

Zachhuber, J. and Torrance, A. (eds) (1981) *Individuality in Late Antiquity* (Burlington).

CHAPTER 2

Locating Memory and Imagination: From Nemesius of Emesa to John of Damascus

Ken Parry

There appears to have been no consensus in the ancient Greek and Roman worlds on where the faculties of memory and imagination were located. For some the heart was the seat of memory and imagination while for others it was the head. This paper focuses on the interest in the localisation of these two faculties in late antiquity and early Byzantium, from the time of Nemesius of Emesa in the 4th century to John of Damascus in the 8th. It was during this period that the theory of ventricular localisation was promoted, which was subsequently embraced as the norm in the Greek, Latin and Arabic medieval worlds.

1 Ancient Theories of Soul

In looking at the history of the localisation of memory and imagination, it is necessary to turn to some ancient theories regarding the nature of soul and its relation to the body. In the context of Greek thought this means dealing with ψυχή, the life-principle that inhabits all living things. In a modern context psyche and psychology concerns the mind and its functions located in the human brain, but for the Greeks soul was a more encompassing concept than our notion of mind. It was λόγος or reason that was believed to be the controlling principle of soul and its location in the human body, together with other faculties, such as memory and imagination. Although the body was the vehicle of soul, it was necessary for them to communicate and interact with each other for life to function. If communication between them was disrupted through disease, illness, or accident, then medical intervention was required. From the point of view of ancient medicine, the dichotomy between soul and body was less one of antagonism and more one of interdependence. The role of the physician was to restore the balance that was lost and this might be done by means of pharmacology, surgery, or life-style management. Plato, for

© KONINKLIJKE BRILL NV, LEIDEN, 2018 | DOI:10.1163/9789004375710_004

example, advocated a sensible diet that restricted excessive eating of meat and confectionary, as well as drinking of wine.[1]

It was Plato who compared the soul to a pearl with the oyster for its body,[2] while the Stoics thought of soul as an octopus extending its tentacles throughout the body.[3] Among Aristotle's writings is a separate treatise on the topic of soul, his *De Anima*. He also wrote a work *On Memory and Recollection*, which is not directly relevant to our theme as it concerns the complex processes by which we remember and recall things, rather than the localising of memory and recollection.[4] We should note that Aristotle often attributes the faculties of memory and imagination, together with reason, to the same organ, namely the heart, but he is not consistent in this.[5] Historically, however, Aristotle is associated with the cardiocentric theory. This in turn is connected to the location of the common sense, or the *sensus communis* (κοινὴ αἴσθησις). The term "common sense" as it is used today to mean native wit or sound judgement is not the meaning it had in antiquity.

For Aristotle, the common sense was the operating centre at which the external senses, such as sight and smell, processed sense-perceptions coming from their respective organs of the body. The internal senses such as memory and imagination were also processed at this location.[6] This heart-centred theory was challenged by Galen in the second century CE, who followed Plato in dividing the soul into reason, spirit and desire, and locating them in the brain, the heart, and the liver respectively. However, Galen went further in making the brain the *sensus communis*, thus formulating what is known as the encephalocentric theory. Hippocrates was one of the first to suggest the hegemony of the brain as the soul's location.[7]

Because soul has a biological function we can speak of its physiology, given that the brain, the heart, and the liver function as components of it. Aristotle followed Plato in identifying the soul as tripartite but, as we have seen, he

1 Skiadas and Lascaratos 2001.

2 *Phaedrus* 250 (Hamilton 1973, 57); *Republic* 611–612 (Lee 1955, 391). Marinus in his *Life of Proclus*, refers to the mortal body as a shell-like covering, perhaps taking his cue from Plato in the *Republic* (Edwards 2000, 61).

3 Aëtius (doxographer) 4.21.1–4 (Long and Sedley 1987, 315). A catalogue accompanying the exhibition *The Soul is an Octopus: Ancient Ideas of Life and the Body* at the Berliner Medizinhistorisches Museum der Charité is available to download, see Kornmeier 2016.

4 *De memoria et reminiscentia* (Sorabji 2004). This work of Aristotle's is part of the *Parva Naturalia* (*Short Treatises on Nature*), a late term coined by Giles of Rome in the 13th century.

5 See the remarks by van der Eijk 2005, esp. 224.

6 See Gregorić 2007.

7 *The Sacred Disease* (Lloyd 1978, 237–251); Rocca 2003, 24–28.

generally assigned a single organ to its functions. For the Greeks, only divine beings were completely incorporeal [ἀσώματος], so even daemons and guardian spirits were made of a pneumatic substance, this pneuma being the stuff of soul. This was the psychic pneuma or vital spirit through which the soul's energy was transmitted to the body; this life force acted as a mediator between soul and body. The mechanism by which this was thought to happen was via the central nervous system or the cardiovascular system, both systems being known in some form to the ancients.[8] Galen disclaimed knowledge of the soul's substance and whether it was corporeal or incorporeal, mortal or immortal, and distinguished three types of pneuma, the physical, the vital and the psychic for the three main organs of the body, the heart, the liver, and the brain.[9]

2 Galen

No study of ancient medicine can ignore the writings of Galen whose contribution to medical science was unparalleled from the Roman through to the early modern period, being the main medical authority in the medieval Christian, Jewish and Muslim worlds. A large corpus of his writings has come down to us with new discoveries being made through to the present. In 2005, for example, the complete Greek text of his *Avoiding Distress* (Περὶ Ἀλυπίας) was discovered in a manuscript in Thessalonica.[10] Galen examined the question of the physical location of the faculties of memory and imagination, but although not directly responsible for the theory of assigning these faculties to different ventricles of the brain, he laid the foundations for the theory to develop.[11] For him, the controlling organ of the body was the brain, the ruling power (ἡγεμονικόν) of the rational soul. From his investigation into brain function by animal dissection he concluded that nature does nothing in vain and what it does it does skilfully (τεχνικός), and with a purposeful end.[12] He suggests that the activities of the rational soul encompass imagination, reason and memory, but these are not placed in any specific region of the brain.[13]

8 See the early chapters on vital spirit and psychophysiology in Smith et al. 2012.
9 Hankinson 2006.
10 Nutton 2014.
11 Green 2003; Manzoni 1998.
12 On Galen's teleology see Frede 2003.
13 Rocca 2003, 245; Hankinson 1996.

3 Nemesius of Emesa

Moving to the late fourth/early fifth century we come to Nemesius, who may have been bishop of Emesa in Syria (present day Homs), and who is known by a single work *On the Nature of Man* (*De natura hominis*).[14] In the manuscript tradition *On the Nature of Man*, a title derived from a work in the Hippocratic Corpus, was wrongly attributed to Gregory of Nyssa because of his work *On the Making of Man* (*De opificio hominis*). Questions relating to Nemesius' *floruit* and reception remain because his work is thought not to be cited before the 7th century. Maximus the Confessor appears to be the first to quote directly from him, most notably on providence,[15] but it is not clear that Maximus knew who the author was as he does not name him. It has been suggested that Nemesius belonged to the sixth century because he is listed between Anastasius I of Antioch (who died in 599) and Maximus in a florilegium on the nature of will in the latter's *Minor Works*.[16] However, this could be due to scribal uncertainty about where to place him chronologically.[17]

For a work by a Christian author, *On the Nature of Man* has a strong philosophical and iatrosophic focus, showing familiarity with a range of late Platonic, Aristotelian, and medical sources, with theological issues playing a relatively minor role. His principal interest is in the physiological and psychological make-up of the human person from an anthropological point of view. He writes on the nature of the union between body and soul, discussing theories of mixture and blending to demonstrate the psychosomatic unity of the individual. He favours a theory that he ascribes to the teacher of Plotinus, Ammonius Saccas, who argued that body and soul, like the sensible and the intelligible, may co-exist without the soul being compounded (ἀσύγχυτος) with the body.[18] This conjunction of soul and body is then applied by Nemesius to

14 Nemesius, *De nat. hom.* (Morani 1987, trans. Telfer 1955; Sharples and van der Eijk 2008).

15 Maximus the Confessor, *Ambiguum* 10, 42 (Constas 2014/1, 309–321). See further Neil 2015 and Parry 2017a.

16 Maximus the Confessor, *Opuscula theologica et polemica*, PG 91, 277CD. See Morani 1981, 101–104 for citations of Nemesius by Maximus.

17 On the argument for this sixth century dating with a proposed connection to the Origenist controversy, see Beatrice 2009, esp. 523–524.

18 Nemesius, *De nat. hom.* 3, 40–41 (Morani 1987; trans. Sharples and van der Eijk 2008, 80-81). Compare this position with Priscian of Lydia in his *Answers to Khosroes* (Huby *et al.* 2016, 51.9–18, 24–26). Porphyry is the most probable source of Ammonius Saccas for Nemesius, see Rist 1998. On ἀσύγχυτος ἕνωσις in christology and trinitarian theology, see Abramowski 1981.

the doctrine of Christ's incarnation, along with a list of apophatic attributes in a similar manner to the definition of faith promoted by the Council of Chalcedon in 451.[19]

What is important for this paper is that Nemesius allocates the faculties of memory, imagination and reason to different cavities of the brain. This is what he says about imagination:

> ὄργανα δὲ αὐτοῦ αἱ πρόσθιοι τοῦ ἐγκεφάλου κοιλίαι καὶ τὸ ἐν αὐταῖς ψυχικὸν πνεῦμα καὶ τὰ ἐξ αὐτῶν νεῦρα τὰ διάβροχα τῷ ψυχικῷ πνεύματι καὶ ἡ κατασκευὴ \ τῶν αἰσθητηρίων.[20]
>
> The organs of imagination are the frontal cavities of the brain,[21] the psychic pneuma within them, the nerves from them soaked with the psychic pneuma and the apparatus of the sense-organs.

And this about reason:

> ὄργανον δὲ καὶ τούτου ἡ μέση κοιλία τοῦ ἐγκεφάλου καὶ τὸ ψυχικὸν πνεῦμα τὸ ἐν αὐτῇ.[22]
>
> Its organ is also the central cavity of the brain and the psychic pneuma within the cavity.

And this about memory:

> ὄργανον δὲ καὶ τούτου ἡ ὄπισθεν κοιλία τοῦ ἐγκεφάλου, ἣν καὶ παρεγκεφαλίδα καὶ ἐγκρανίδα καλοῦσι, καὶ τὸ ἐν αὐτῷ ψυχικὸν πνεῦμα.[23]

---

19 Nemesius, *De nat. hom.* 3, 42 (Morani 1987; trans. Sharples and van der Eijk 2008, 84). Council of Chalcedon, Fifth Session (trans. Price and Gaddis 2015, 2. 204).

20 Nemesius, *De nat. hom.* 6, 173 (Morani 1987; trans. Sharples and van der Eijk 2008, 101–102).

21 We may note that Nemesius follows Galen in using the plural κοιλίαι τοῦ ἐγκεφάλου to indicate two anterior cavities of the brain. This is not always indicated by later authors. The term κοιλία for ventricle was known to Photius in Question 322, *On Medical Matters* in his *Amphilochia* (Laourdas and Westerink 1984, 130).

22 Nemesius, Nemesius, *De nat. hom.* 12, 201 (Morani 1987; trans. Sharples and van der Eijk 2008, 118).

23 Nemesius, *De nat. hom.* 13, 204 (Morani 1987; trans. Sharples and van der Eijk 2008, 121).

> The organ of memory, too, is the posterior cavity of the brain, which they call the cerebellum and the encranion (ἐγκράνιον),[24] and the psychic pneuma within it.

Furthermore, Nemesius offers empirical evidence for the theory of different ventricles for these three faculties. He cites the case of phrenitis or inflammation of the brain, known also as encephalitis, accompanied by fever and delirium which may result in amnesia or mental disturbance.[25] His knowledge of the impact of phrenitis echoes what Posidonius of Byzantium is reported to have said by Aëtius of Amida in the 6th century.

4 Aëtius of Amida and Posidonius of Byzantium

The sixth-century medical author Aëtius of Amida (ca. 502–575) (modern Diyarbakir) is our main source for the physician Posidonius of Byzantium, who may have been a near contemporary of Nemesius.[26] He preserves several fragments of Posidonius in his *Iatrica* that deal with the localisation of the intellectual faculties, placing imagination in the front part of the brain, reason in the middle part, and memory in the back part. If we trust the information given by Aëtius, then Posidonius derived his localization theory from observing the effects of damage done to different areas of the brain. He is quoted as stating:

> Τοῦ μὲν οὖν ἐμπροσθίου μέρους τοῦ ἐγκεφάλου βλαβέντος τὸ φανταστικὸν μόνον ἠδίκηται, τῆς δὲ μέσης κοιλίας τοῦ ἐγκεφάλου βλαβείσης παρατροπὴ γίγνεται τοῦ λογιστικοῦ, τοῦ δὲ κατὰ τὸ ἰνίον ὀπισθίου ἐγκεφάλου βλαβέντος ἀπόλλυται τὸ μνημονευτικόν.[27]
>
> When the anterior region of the brain is damaged the faculty of imagination is disrupted; when the middle ventricle of the brain is damaged the faculty of reasoning is impeded; and when the posterior part of the brain under the occipital bone is damaged the faculty of memory is destroyed.[28]

---

24 Known to Galen (May 1968/1, 398 and 414).

25 Nemesius, *De nat. hom.* 13, 206 (Morani 1987; trans. Sharples and van der Eijk 2008, 122–123). See also van der Eijk 2008.

26 On Aëtius of Amida, see Scarborough 2013.

27 Aëtius, *Lib. Medic.* VI 2.12, 16–19 (Olivieri 1950).

28 My thanks to Ricarda Gäbel for sending me her paper on Aëtius on mental illness: Gäbel 2018.

Modern medical science has observed the effects of brain damage resulting in short—and long—term memory loss, with long-term memories now thought to be stored in the hippocampus. Recent research suggests that imagination involves a complex of neural pathways across many areas of the brain at once rather than in a single area.

But who was this Posidonius of Byzantium? In the *Church History* of the Arian historian, Philostorgius (epitomised by Photius in his *Bibliotheca, Codex* 40),[29] mention is made of a namesake of Philostorgius who lived in the reign of Valentinian (r. 364–375) and Valens (r. 364–378), and who had two sons one of whom was called Posidonius. Photius says:

> θεάσασθαι δὲ τὸν Ποσειδώνιον ἐν ἰατρικῇ διαπρέποντα. λέγειν δ' αὐτὸν ὅμως οὐκ ὀρθῶς οὐχὶ δαιμόνων ἐπιθέσει τοὺς ἀνθρώπους ἐκβακχεύεσθαι, ὑγρῶν δέ τινων κακοχυμίαν [5] τὸ πάθος ἐργάζεσθαι. μηδὲ γὰρ εἶναι τὸ παράπαν ἰσχὺν δαιμόνων ἀνθρώπων φύσιν ἐπηρεάζουσαν.[30]
>
> He [Philostorgius] says of Posidonius that he was outstanding in the field of medicine. He adds, though, that he was unsound in maintaining that it is not demonic attack that makes people mad but that their disease is due to the unhealthy mixture of certain humours. For the power of demons, he said, is no way threatens human beings.

Here Philostorgius' Christian faith obliges him to postulate demonic activity for the cause of mental illness rather than Hippocratic medical science.[31] If this Posidonius is our Posidonius it is not clear how he came to acquire the toponym "of Byzantium". Whoever Posidonius was, the theory of ventricular localisation became standard in subsequent medical histories. It is found, for example, in the Arabic writings of the ninth-century Melkite translator in Baghdad, Qusṭā ibn Lūqā (820–912) or Costa ben Luca,[32] as well as in those of his contemporary translator from the Church of the East, Ḥunayn ibn Isḥāq.[33]

---

29 Photius, *Bibliotheca* cod. 40 (Henry 1959).

30 Philostorgius, *Church History* 8.10 (Winkelman 1981; trans. Amidon 2007, 117–118).

31 The Hippocratic Corpus (circa. 400 BCE) on the "sacred disease" of epilepsy says that it is not due to a divine cause but to the accumulation of phlegmatic humour in the brain. It also says that it is hereditary (Lloyd 1978, 237–251).

32 Cooper 2014. See further Wilcox 1987, 57–74, as well as her doctoral thesis 1985.

33 In his work on ophthalmology (Meyerhof 1928). Both Ḥunayn ibn Isḥāq and Qusṭā ibn Lūqā mention the "cerebellar vermis" or "worm-like structure", discussed by Galen (trans. May 1968/1, 419–423), located in the canal between the middle and posterior cavities of the brain, which operates like a valve by blocking or allowing the psychic pneuma to pass

In the medieval Latin West Qusṭā ibn Lūqā was known as Constabulus and Ḥunayn ibn Isḥāq as Johannitus. A passage of Qusṭā's on the ventricle theory is quoted in the eleventh-century Arabic *Philosophy Reader* associated with the Muslim philosopher Miskawayh (932–1030).[34]

5 John Philoponus

In the 6th century, John Philoponus in his commentary on Aristotle's *De anima* shows familiarity with medical science and knows of the ventricular placement theory. He writes:

> For the soul feels pain when the body suffers, and pleasure when the body is content. Also the fact that the body, when it is in this or that condition, hinders the soul or does not hinder it, is known to everybody, whereas this hindering of the soul through the body would not happen unless some sort of sympathetic reaction proceeded from the soul's relationship with the body to the soul in this way, just as memory is affected when a particular cavity at the back of the brain is affected, as is the reasoning faculty of the soul when some other cavity is affected, and when [the brain] is in a certain state it is easy for the soul to exercise imagination, but when it is in a different state, it is very difficult to imagine.[35]

Although he appears to be aware of the theory of localisation, Philoponus specifies only the posterior cavity of the brain where memory is located.[36] The soul's faculties of imagination (φανταστικόν), cognition (λογιστικόν), and memory (μνημονευτικόν) are impaired through injury to their respective parts of the brain. Thus, our ability to remember, think and imagine may be compromised as either a result of accident or disease.

He may not be concerned with the location of the brain's ventricles, but in the medical works ascribed to Stephanus of Alexandria of the late 6th century, the psychic faculties of imagination, cognition and recollection, together with other faculties, are described as having a derivative or adjectival relation to

---

between them. The vermis is shown in Latin medieval texts illustrating the ventricle theory: see Figures 1 and 2.

34 Wakelnig 2014, 248–251.

35 John Philoponus, *De anima* 155.25 (trans. van der Eijk 2006, 77–78).

36 On Philoponus' awareness of the ventricle system, see Todd 1984.

their functions. Thus, the function of the faculty of imagination is imaginative; the function of the faculty of cognition is cognitive; and the function of the faculty of recollection is recollective.[37] As for Stephanus himself, whether of Alexandria or Athens,[38] he has attributed to him various works dealing with philosophy, medicine and alchemy.[39] However, a clearer picture is now beginning to emerge of these respective personae of Stephanus, particularly in relation to his Christian identity as a philosopher and logician.[40]

6 Anastasius of Sinai

In the 7th century Anastasius of Sinai, in *Questions and Answers*, discusses what happens when the soul is separated from the body, and concludes that the soul remains in a sleep-like state until the resurrection.[41] In doing so he remarks that mind as the controlling principle of soul is located in the brain, just as God directs things from above. The idea that because of the erect posture of human beings the brain must be the controlling centre is an ancient one.[42] He writes:

> Our [invisible] soul displays its own activities through the visible body which belongs to it …; the soul has the mind [νοῦς] placed as a commander [ἡγεμῶν] in the brain above what is called the *ouraniskon*,[43] after the pattern of God who is above the heaven, the mind serving to dispose and control the body as if it were some earthly cosmos. That is why, should someone be seen to receive some violent blow on the head, the mind suffers at once and the person can no longer decide nor remember as before.[44]

Although not precise about the location of decision-making and recollection, Anastasius is exact in identifying the faculties of the soul with their respective organs:

37 Stephanus of Athens, *Hippocrates, Aphorisms* 1.1 (Westerink 1985, 37).
38 Wolska-Conus 1989.
39 On the latter see Papathanassiou 2006.
40 Roueché 2016.
41 Krausmüller 2013.
42 Gregorić 2005.
43 Lit. "little heaven", i.e. the roof of the mouth.
44 Anastasius of Sinai, *Question* 19.4 (trans. Munitiz 2011, 90–91).

> On the other hand, the reasoning part [τὸ λογιστικόν] is activated by the soul through the heart, the concupiscent part [τὸ ἐπιθυμητικόν] through the liver, the humorous part [τὸ μειδιαστκόν] through the spleen, the breathing [τὸ ἀναπνευστικόν] through the lung, the generative [τὸ γόνιμον] through the kidneys, the passionate [τὸ θυμικόν] through the blood, the knowing [τὸ γνωριστικόν] through the eyes, the speaking [τὸ λαλητόν] through the tongue, so that when the latter is cut out, one can no long speak. [6] For the same reason when it (I mean the soul) is separated from the whole body, it can no longer perform the acts it sets in motion through the limbs of the body …[45]

The concept of soul as a life force permeating the whole body is here articulated with a view to understanding bodily resurrection. The soul animates the body and is responsible for administering its different functions, but without the body it has no purpose to fulfil, hence its somnolent state. The question of soul sleep or the dormition of the soul was discussed in relation to the intercession of the saints and the fate of the disembodied soul.[46]

It is of interest in relation to this question to find Anastasius citing an out-of-body experience to show that the soul keeps its identity when separated from the body. He reports his own spiritual teacher telling him:

> [W]hen I woke up from my dream, I was incapable of sketching out or imagining what shape or form I had had outside of my body, except for the fact that my soul's existence was personally mine [ἐνυπόστατος] and not a figment of the imagination [ἀφαντασίατος].[47]

The emphasis here on the soul retaining its individuality was important in the debate concerning the fate of the post-mortem soul. The nature of the soul's identity when separated from the body, and whether disembodied souls would recognise one another, was of concern to Plotinus and the Neoplatonists. For Plotinus memory is closely linked with individuality (ἰδιότητος), so he does not think it wrong that souls in their spherical or astral bodies will continue to

45 Anastasius of Sinai, *Question* 19.5–6 (trans. Munitiz 2011, 91). See further, Munitiz 1999.

46 Krausmüller 2015; Parry 2017b. John of Damascus in *Heresy* 90 (θνητοψυχῖται) of his *Book of Heresies* denounces those who believe the human soul is like that of animals and dies with the body (Kotter 1981, 57).

47 Anastasius of Sinai, *Question* 21.4 (trans. Munitiz 2011, 96). See Plotinus' famous out-of-body experiences (*Enneads* IV 4.8.1) in Porphyry's *Life of Plotinus* (Edwards 2000, 44–46).

be recognised by their personal characteristics.[48] Anastasius' use of the term ἐνυπόστατος for individual identity became associated with Neochalcedonian theology, particularly from the 6th century onwards through to John of Damascus in the 8th century.[49]

7 John of Damascus

Finally, we come to John of Damascus in the first half of the 8th century who gives 71 citations from Nemesius' *On the Nature of Man*, the largest number by a Greek author.[50] This suggests that John had access to an edition of the text, or at least an anthology incorporating extensive passages from it. Also, like Maximus, he quotes Nemesius on providence, but (if Louth is correct) John appears to cite passages independently of Maximus,[51] although he—like Maximus—does not name his source. Furthermore, it may have been the availability of Nemesius' work in Syria-Palestine in the 8th century that was the channel by which it found its way into Syriac and Arabic.

This hypothesis may be supported by the following evidence. In the late 8th century Timothy I, *catholicos* of the Church of the East in Baghdad in his *Letter* 43 to Plethion (dated 782/783), asks his correspondent to search for a manuscript of a work by the philosopher Nemesius on the structure of man, and provides an accurate *incipit*:

> Search out for a work by a certain philosopher called Nemesius, on the structure of man, which begins: "Man is excellently constructed as a rational soul and body …". He brings the subject to an end in roughly five sections; at the end he promises to deal with the soul, but this second part is missing.[52]

According to the *Kitāb al-Fihrist* of Ibn al-Nadīm, both Ḥunayn ibn Isḥāq of the Church of the East, and the Melkite Qusṭā ibn Lūqā travelled to (former?)

48 Plotinus, *Enneads* IV 4.5. For discussion see King 2009, 3.2. On the spherical shape of soul vehicles, including that imputed to Origen (Sorabji 2005, 236–238).

49 On this term see Gleede 2012.

50 Kontouma 2015, v. 7. For citations of Nemesius in John's *Expositio fidei* (Kotter 1973, 256–257), and Morani 1981, 104–114.

51 Louth 1996, 210 n. 110; Louth 2015, 252.

52 Trans. Brock 1999, 237.

Byzantine territory to collect Greek manuscripts,[53] but it may have been Isḥāq, the son of Ḥunayn ibn Isḥāq, who translated Nemesius into Arabic in the 9th century.[54] Only fragments of a Syriac version are preserved, mainly in quotations given by the Syrian Orthodox, John of Dara, in the first half of the 9th century in his *Treatise on the Soul*.[55] Nemesius was also known to another Syrian Orthodox author, Moses bar Kepha (d. 903), who names him and calls him '*philosophus Christianus*'.[56] As noted above, *On the Nature of Man* was often attributed to Gregory of Nyssa in the manuscript tradition, but a fragment of an Arabic version, most probably from the 9th century, identifies it correctly as the work of Nemesius.[57] It is known to have been translated into Armenian under Gregory's name around 717.[58] Whatever the case regarding its attribution, Nemesius' work was crossing several linguistic boundaries in the 8th and 9th centuries. In ninth-century Byzantium, the ventricle theory of imagination, ratiocination, and memory was familiar to the iatrosophist and physician Meletius the Monk in his *On the Constitution of Man*.[59]

It is in John of Damascus' *Precise Edition of the Orthodox Faith* (*Expositio fidei*), traditionally the third part of his *Fount of Knowledge*, that we find an explanation of imagination, reason and memory. As John writes:

> Φανταστικόν ἐστι δύναμις τῆς ἀλόγου ψυχῆς διὰ τῶν αἰσθητηρίων ἐνεργοῦσα, ἥτις λέγεται αἴσθησις. Φανταστικὸν δὲ καὶ αἰσθητὸν τὸ τῇ φαντασίᾳ καὶ τῇ αἰσθήσει ὑποπῖπτον· ὡς ὅρασις μὲν αὐτὴ ἡ ὀπτικὴ δύναμις, ὁρατὸν δὲ τὸ ὑποπῖπτον τῇ ὁράσει, λίθος τυχὸν ἤ τι τῶν τοιούτων. Φαντασία δέ ἐστι πάθος τῆς ἀλόγου ψυχῆς ὑπὸ φανταστοῦ τινος γινόμενον, φάντασμα δὲ πάθος διάκενον

53 A list of works translated and attributed to these authors is given in the *Fihrist* (Dodge 1970, 693–695 and index). Ḥunayn ibn Isḥāq produced an extensive list of his Galenic translations (Lamoreaux 2017).

54 Samir 1986.

55 On John of Dara's work, see Zonta 1991 and 2014.

56 *Commentary on Paradise*, PG 111, 508A.

57 Wakelnig 2014, 33–35.

58 Morani 1981, 71.

59 Περὶ τῆς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου κατασκευῆς (Cramer 1963, 23). The ninth-century date for Meletius is far from certain; see Talbot 1991, 1333. However, Meletius appears to have been known to John the Exarch in the early 10th century, who translated some works of John of Damascus into Slavonic; see Browning 1991, 1069. Meletius paraphrases a passage from the prologue to Maximus the Confessor's *Chapters on Love* (PG 90, 959–961) in the section on ophthalmology in his *On the Constitution of Man* (61–72), see Renehan 1984, 161. As Maria Mavroudi points out this suggests a *floruit* for Meletius between the 7th and 9th centuries, Mavroudi 2017, 131.

> ἐν τοῖς ἀλόγοις τῆς ψυχῆς ἀπ᾽ οὐδενὸς φάνταστοῦ γινόμενον. Ὄργανον δὲ τοῦ φανταστικοῦ ἡ ἐμπρόσθιος κοιλία τοῦ ἐγκεφάλου.[60]
>
> The faculty of imagination concerns the irrational part of the soul and acts through the senses and is called a sensation. In addition, that which comes within the realm of imagination and the senses is the imaginative and the sensible, just as the visible, for example a stone, comes within the realm of sight, and is the power of vision. An imagination is a disposition of the irrational part of the soul arising from some imaginable object, but a phantasm is an empty disposition arising from the same part of the soul from no imaginable object. The organ of the imagination is the frontal ventricle of the brain.

He goes on to state that:

> Τοῦ δὲ διανοητικοῦ εἰσιν αἵ τε κρίσεις καὶ αἱ συγκαταθέσεις καὶ αἱ ὁρμαὶ πρὸς τὴν πρᾶξιν καὶ αἱ ἀφορμαὶ καὶ αἱ ἀποφυγαὶ τῆς πράξεως, ἰδικῶς δὲ αἵ τε νοήσεις τῶν νοητῶν καὶ αἱ ἀρεταὶ καὶ αἱ ἐπιστῆμαι καὶ τῶν τεχνῶν οἱ λόγοι καὶ τὸ βουλευτικὸν καὶ τὸ προαιρετικόν. Τούτου δέ ἐστι τὸ καὶ διὰ τῶν ὀνείρων θεσπίζον ἡμῖν τὸ μέλλον, ἥνπερ μόνην ἀληθῆ μαντείαν οἱ Πυθαγορικοὶ λέγουσιν εἶναι τοῖς Ἑβραίοις ἀκολουθήσαντες. Ὄργανον δὲ καὶ τούτου ἡ μέση κοιλία τοῦ ἐγκεφάλου καὶ τὸ ψυχικὸν πνεῦμα τὸ ἐν αὐτῇ.[61]
>
> To the faculty of cognition belong judgments, acknowledgments, inclinations and disinclinations to act, and evasions of action, but especially concepts of intellectual things, the virtues and sciences, and the principles of the arts, as well as the deliberative and decisive powers associated with it. It is also this faculty which predicts the future through dreams, which the Pythagoreans, following the Hebrews, say is the only true prophecy. The organ of this faculty is the middle ventricle of the brain and the psychic pneuma found in it.

60 *Expositio fidei* 2.17 (Kotter 1973, 83). Although Manzoni 1998 includes John of Damascus in his survey of the ventricle location theory he mistakenly states (144) that he was a physician and translator in Baghdad.

61 *Expositio fidei* 2.19 (Kotter 1973, 86).

And furthermore:

> Ἀνάμνησις δὲ λέγεται μνήμης ἀπολλυμένης ὑπὸ λήθης ἀνάκτησις. Λήθη δέ ἐστι μνήμης ἀποβολή. Τὸ μὲν οὖν φανταστικὸν διὰ τῶν αἰσθήσεων ἀντιλαμβνόμενον τῶν ὑλῶν παραδίδωσι τῷ διανοητικῷ ἢ διαλογιστικῷ (ταὐτὸν γὰρ ἀμφότερα)· ὃ παραλαβὸν καὶ κρῖναν παραπέμπει τῷ μνημονευτικῷ. Ὄργανον δὲ τοῦ μνημονευτικοῦ ἡ ὄπισθεν κοιλία τοῦ ἐγκεφάλου, ἣν καὶ παρεγκεφαλίδα καλοῦσι, καὶ τὸ ἐν αὐτῇ ψυχικὸν πνεῦμα.[62]
>
> Recollection is the recalling of memory that has been lost through forgetting, while forgetting is the loss of memory. When the imaginative faculty has apprehended material objects by means of the senses, it transmits [the perception] to the cognitive faculty, or reasoning faculty (both amount to the same thing). When the cognitive faculty has received the sense perception and made a judgment about it, it transmits this to the faculty of memory. The organ of the faculty of memory is the rear ventricle of the brain, which is also called the cerebellum, and the psychic pneuma found in it.

John's use of the term 'psychic pneuma' has come through from the ancients via Galen and Nemesius who applied the term in relation to brain activity and cognitive processes. This colourless substance produced in the choroid plexuses of the ventricles of the brain is known today as cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) and is said to be replenished three to four times a day. We should add that John also alludes to the theory of ventricular location in the first of his *Three Orations Against the Iconoclasts* where he writes:

> Διὰ γὰρ τῆς αἰσθήσεως φαντασία τις συνίσταται ἐν τῇ ἐμπροσθίῳ κοιλίᾳ τοῦ ἐγκεφάλου καὶ οὕτω τῷ κριτικῷ παραπέμπεται καὶ τῇ μνήμῃ ἐνθησαυρίζεται.[63]
>
> It is through sense perception that an imagination is formed in the front ventricle of the brain and transmitted to the faculty of reason and stored in the memory.

In his discussion of the five senses the Damascene has this to say about the nature of the soul:

---

62 *Expositio fidei* 2.20 (Kotter 1973, 87).

63 *Contra imaginum caluminatores orations tres* 1.11 (Kotter 1975, 85).

> Ἡ δὲ ψυχὴ συνδέδεται τῷ σώματι ὅλη ὅλῳ καὶ οὐ μέρος μέρει καὶ οὐ περιέχεται ὑπ᾽ αὐτοῦ, ἀλλα περιέχει αὐτὸ ὥσπερ πῦρ σίδηρον καὶ ἐν αὐτῷ οὖσα τὰς οἰκείας ἐνεργείας ἐνεργεῖ.[64]
>
> The soul is united with the body, the whole soul with the whole body and not part for part. Yet it is not contained by the body, but instead contains it, just as heat does iron, and although it is in the body, it has its own distinct activities.

The question whether the soul had parts and if so how these parts related and interacted with different parts of the body was a point of discussion in Neoplatonic philosophy as well as in Christianity.[65] The consensus by John's time was that soul was believed to be non-spatial and indivisible, an activating principle co-extensive with the body, and with psychic pneuma a causal agent of it.[66]

8 Concluding Remarks

What we have presented here is an overview of the theory of ventricular localisation as it was known in late antiquity and the early Byzantine period. The history of the theory continues into the medieval and early modern periods across linguistic and religious boundaries. The ancient interest in investigating where our cognitive faculties reside has continued with medical technology monitoring brain activity with greater precision and accuracy. Modern neuroscience may not recognise such terms as 'psychic pneuma' or 'vital spirit', but it is still at an early stage in understanding how and why our brains have evolved to function the way that they do. Today the ancient conceptual distinction between memory, cognition, and imagination is taken for granted, while brain activity relating to these faculties can be observed by Computerised Axial Tomography (CAT) and Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI). It appears that our authors made a notable contribution to the history of the medical and cognitive sciences, but that this has not always received the attention it deserves.

64 *Expositio fidei* 1.13 (Kotter 1973, 39). See above for Nemesius *De nat. hom.* on the union of the soul with the body without alteration.

65 See Sorabji 2005, 182–216. Iamblichus discusses 'parts' or 'powers' of the soul in his *De anima* (Finamore and Dillion 2002, 35–41).

66 On the soul and its relation to the body in early Christianity, see Karamanolis 2013, 181–213.

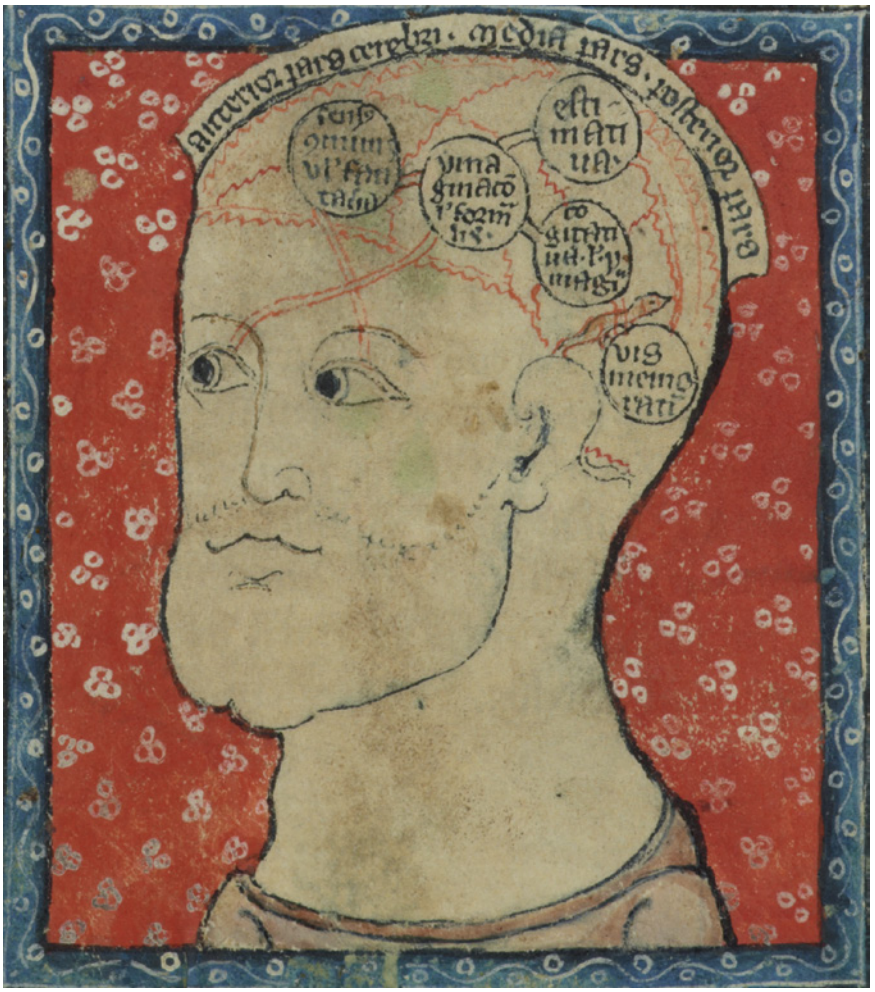


FIGURE 2.1 Illustration ca. 1300 showing the brain ventricles, with the *sensus communis* and imagination at the front, cognition and judgement in the middle, and memory at the rear. The vermis is located between the middle and rear ventricles.
THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, CAMBRIDGE, MS GR.G.1.1. PERMISSION: CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY.

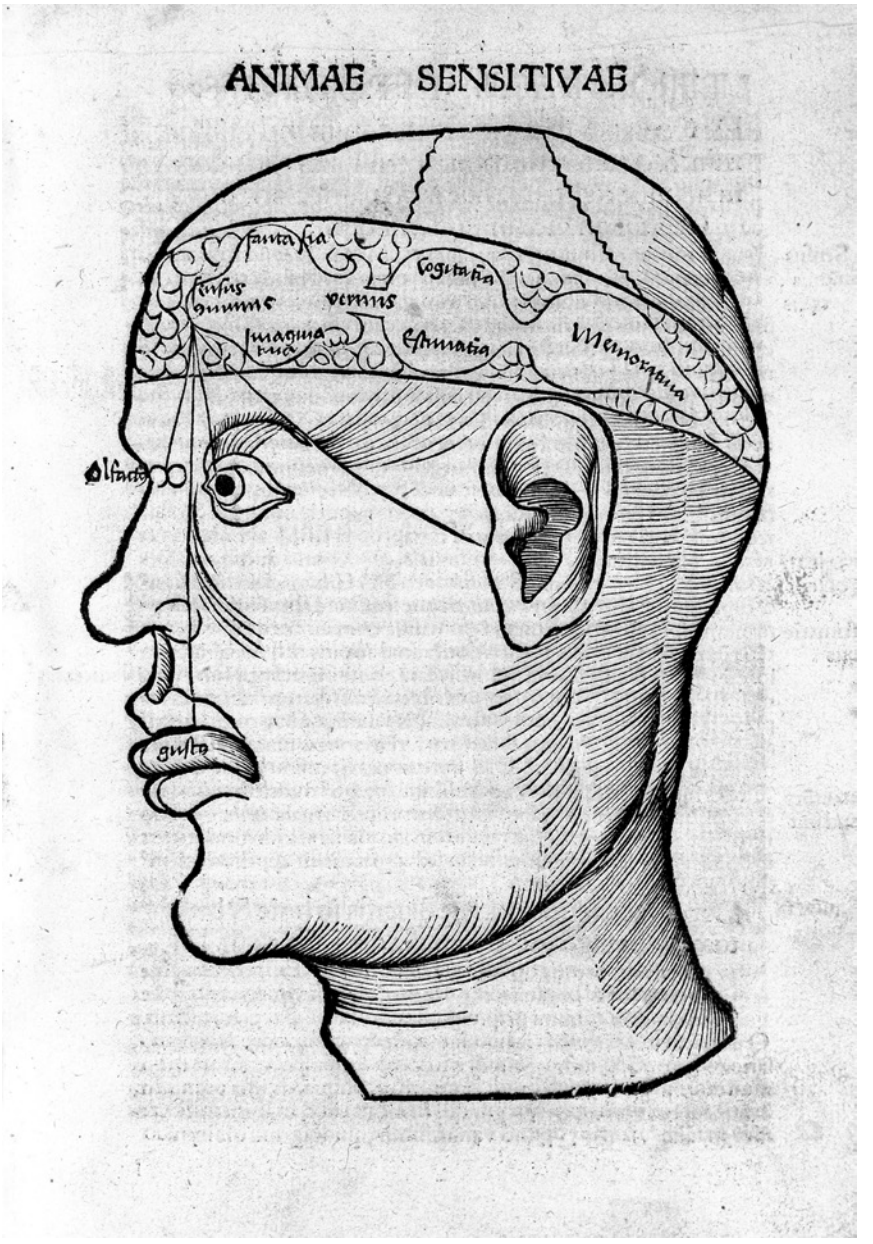


FIGURE 2.2 The *sensus communis*, fantasy and imagination in the first (anterior) ventricle, cognition and judgement in the second (middle) ventricle, and memory in the third (posterior) ventricle. The vermis is located between the first and second ventricles. From Gregor Reisch, *Margarita philosophica*. Freiburg 1503, 461. CREDIT: WELCOME COLLECTION.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

Aëtius of Amida (1950) *Aetii Amideni, Libri medicinales V–VIII*, ed. A. Olivieri, Corpus Medicorum Graecorum VIII 2 (Leipzig and Berlin).

Al-Nadim (1970) *The Fihrist of al-Nadīm: A Tenth-Century Survey of Islamic Culture*, trans. B. Dodge, 2 vols (New York and London).

Anastasius of Sinai (2011) *Questions and Answers*, trans. J. Munitiz, Corpus Christianorum in Translation 7 (Turnhout).

Aristotle (2004) *De memoria et reminiscentia*, trans. R. Sorabji, *On Memory*, 2nd edn (Chicago).

Council of Chalcedon (2015) *The Acts of the Council of Chalcedon*, trans. R. Price and M. Gaddis, TTH 45, 3 vols (Liverpool).

Galen (1968) *Galen on the Usefulness of the Parts of the Body*, trans. M. T. May, 2 vols (Ithaca, NY).

Galen (2014) *Avoiding Distress*, trans. V. Nutton, in *Galen: Psychological Writings; Avoiding Distress, Character Traits, The Diagnosis and Treatment of the Affections and Errors Peculiar to Each Person's Soul, The Capacities of the Soul Depend on the Mixtures of the Body*, ed. P. N. Singer (Cambridge).

Hippocrates (1978) *Hippocratic Writings*, ed. G. E. R. Lloyd (Harmonsworth).

Ḥunayn ibn Isḥāq (1928) *The Book of the Ten Treatises on the Eye ascribed to Ḥunain ibn Isḥâq (809–877 AD)*, trans. M. Meyerhof (Cairo).

Ḥunayn ibn Isḥāq (2017) *On His Galen Translations, a parallel English-Arabic text*, ed. and trans. J. C. Lamoreaux (Provo, Utah).

Iamblichus (2002) *De anima*, text, trans. and commentary by J. F. Finamore and J. M. Dillon. Philosophia antiqua 42 (Atlanta and Leiden).

John of Damascus (1973) *Expositio fidei*, ed. B. Kotter, *Die Schriften des Johannes von Damaskos*, vol. II (Berlin).

John of Damascus (1975), *Contra imaginum caluminatores orations tres*, ed. B. Kotter, *Die Schriften des Johannes von Damaskos*, vol. III (Berlin).

John of Damascus (1981) *Liber de haeresibus*, ed. B. Kotter, *Die Schriften des Johannes von Damaskos*, vol. IV (Berlin).

John Philoponus (2006) *Philoponus: On Aristotle on the Soul, 1.3–5*, trans. P. J. van der Eijk, Ancient Commentators on Aristotle (London).

Long, A. A. and Sedley, D. N. (1987) *The Hellenistic Philosophers vol. 1. Translations of the Principal Sources with Philosophical Commentary* (Cambridge).

Marinus (2000) *Life of Proclus: Neoplatonic Saints: The Lives of Plotinus and Proclus by their Students*, trans. with introduction by M. Edwards, TTH 35 (Liverpool).

Maximus the Confessor *Capita de caritate*, PG 90, 959–1080.

Maximus the Confessor *Opuscula theologica et polemica*, PG 91, 9–286.

Maximus the Confessor (1996) *Maximus the Confessor*, trans. A. Louth (London).

Maximus the Confessor (2014) *Maximus the Confessor. On Difficulties in the Church Fathers, The Ambigua*, trans. N. Constas, Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Library 28, 2 vols (Cambridge, MA).

Meletius the Monk (1963) *On the Constitution of Man* (Περὶ τῆς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου κατασκευῆς), ed. J. A. Cramer, *Anecdota graeca e codicibus manuscriptis bibliothecarum oxoniensium*, vol. III (Amsterdam).

Miskawayh (2014) *A Philosophy Reader from the Circle of Miskawayh*, trans. E. Wakelnig (Cambridge).

Moses bar Kepha *Commentary on Paradise*, PG 111, 482–608.

Nemesius of Emesa (1955) *Cyril of Jerusalem and Nemesius of Emesa*, trans. W. Telfer (London).

Nemesius of Emesa (1987) *Nemesii Emeseni De natura hominis*, ed. M. Morani, Bibliotheca scriptorium graecorum et romanorum Teubneriana (Leipzig).

Nemesius of Emesa (2008) *Nemesius On the Nature of Man*, trans. R. W. Sharples and P. J. van der Eijk, TTH 49 (Liverpool).

Philostorgius (1981) *Philostorgius. Kirchengeschichte: Mit dem Leben des Lucian von Antiochien und den Fragmenten eines arianischen Historiographen*, ed. J. Bidez; 3rd edn, rev. by F. Winkelmann. GCS 21 (Berlin).

Philostorgius (2007) *Philostorgius: Church History*, trans. P. R. Amidon. Writings from the Greco-Roman World 23 (Atlanta).

Photius (1984) *Amphilochia, Question* 322, eds B. Laourdas and L. G. Westerink, *Photii patriarchae Constantinopolitani, Epistulae et amphilochia*, vol. VI. fasc.1 (Leipzig).

Photius (1959) *Bibliotheca.* Ed. R. Henry, *Bibliothèque: Codices 1–83.* Tome 1 (Paris).

Plato (1955) *Republic*, trans. H. D. P. Lee (Harmonsworth).

Plato (1973) *Phaedrus*, trans. W. Hamilton (Harmonsworth).

Plotinus (1966–1988) *The Enneads*, trans. A. H. Armstrong, 7 vols. LCL (Cambridge, MA).

Porphyry (2000) *Life of Plotinus: Neoplatonic Saints: The Lives of Plotinus and Proclus by their Students*, trans. M. Edwards. TTH 35 (Liverpool).

Priscian of Lydia (2016) *Priscian: Answers to King Khosroes of Persia*, trans. P. Huby et al. Ancient Commentators on Aristotle (London).

Sorabji, R. (ed.) (2005) *The Philosophy of the Commentators 200–600 AD. A Sourcebook. Vol. 1: Psychology* (*with Ethics and Religion*) (Ithaca, NY).

Stephanus of Alexandria/Athens (1985) *Stephani Atheniensis In Hippocratis aphorismos commentaria I–II*, ed. and trans. L. G. Westerink. Corpus medicorum graecorum XI 1,3,1 (Berlin).

Manuscripts

The University Library, Cambridge, ms Gr.g.1.1.

Secondary Sources

Abramowski, L. (1981) '*Synapheia* und *asynchutos henōsis* als Bezeichnung für trinitarische under christologische Einheit', in eadem, *Drei christologische Untersuchungen.* Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft 45 (Berlin), 63–109.

Beatrice, P. F. (2009) 'Origen in Nemesius' Treatise On the Nature of Man', in G. Heidle and R. Somos (eds) *Origeniana Nona: Origen and the religious practice of his time; papers of the 9th International Origen Congress, Pécs, Hungary, 29 August–2 September 2005* (Louvain), 505–532.

Brock, S. (1999) 'Two Letters of the Patriarch Timothy from the Late Eighth Century on Translations from Greek', *Arabic Sciences and Philosophy* 9, 233–246.

Browning, R. (1991) 'John the Exarch', in *ODB*, ed. A. Kazhdan, 3 vols (Oxford), 1069.

Cooper, G. M. (2014) 'Rational and Empirical Medicine in Ninth-Century Baghdad: Qusṭā ibn Lūqā's Questions on the Critical Days in Acute Illnesses', *Arabic Sciences and Philosophy* 24, 69–102.

Eijk, P. J. van der (2005) 'The Matter of Mind: Aristotle on the Biology of "Psychic" Processes and the Bodily Aspects of Thinking', in idem, *Medicine and Philosophy in Classical Antiquity: Doctors and Philosophers on Nature, Soul, Health, and Disease* (Cambridge), 206–237.

Eijk, P. J. van der (2008) 'The Art of Medicine: Nemesius of Emesa and Early Brain Mapping', *The Lancet* 372 (9 August), 440–441.

Frede, M. (2003) 'Galen's Theology', in J. Barnes and J. Jouanna (eds) *Galien et la philosophie.* Foundation Hardt pour l'etude de l'antiquité classique, vol. XLIX (Geneva), 73–126.

Gäbel, R. (2018) 'Mental Illnesses in the Medical Compilations of Late Antiquity—the Case of Aëtius of Amida', in C. Thumiger and P. N. Singer (eds) *Mental Illness in Ancient Medicine: From Celsus to Paul of Aegina* (Leiden), 315–340.

Gleede, B. (2012) *The Development of the Term* ἐνυπόστατος *from Origen to John of Damascus* (Leiden).

Green, C. D. (2003) 'Where did the Ventricular Localization of Mental Faculties Come From?', *Journal of the History of Behavioural Sciences* 39(2), 131–142.

Gregorić, P. (2005) 'Plato's and Aristotle's Explanation of Human Posture', *Rhizai. A Journal for Ancient Philosophy and Science* 2(2), 183–196.

Gregorić, P. (2007) *Aristotle on the Common Sense* (Oxford).

Hankinson, R. J. (1996) 'Galen's Anatomy of the Soul', *Phronesis* 36(2), 197–233.

Hankinson, R. J. (2006) 'Body and Soul in Galen', in R. A. H. King (ed.) *Common to Body and Soul: Philosophical Approaches to Explaining Living Behaviour in Greco-Roman Antiquity* (Berlin & New York), 232–258.

Karamanolis, G. (2013) *The Philosophy of Early Christianity* (London).

King, R. A. H. (2009) *Aristotle and Plotinus on Memory* (Berlin and New York).

Kontouma, V. (2015) 'The *Fount of Knowledge* between Conservation and Creation', in eadem, *John of Damascus: New Studies on his Life and Works*. Variorum Collected Studies Series (Farnham), V.

Kornmeier, U. (ed.) (2016) *The Soul is an Octopus: Ancient Ideas of Life and the Body* (Berlin). Available at: www.topoi.org/publication/34406/.

Krausmüller, D. (2013) '"At the Resurrection We Will Not Recognise One Another"; Radical Evaluation of Social Relations in the Lost Model of Anastasius' and Pseudo-Anastasius' *Questions and Answers*', *Byzantion* 83, 207–227.

Krausmüller, D. (2015) 'Sleeping Souls and Living Corpses: Patriarch Methodios' Defence of the Cult of Saints', *Byzantion* 85, 143–155.

Louth, A. (2015) 'Maximus the Confessor', in K. Parry (ed.) *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Patristics* (Oxford), 250–263.

Manzoni, T. (1998) 'The Cerebral Ventricles, the Animal Spirits and the Dawn of Brain Localization of Function', *Archives Italiennes de Biologie* 136, 103–152.

Mavroudi, M. (2017) 'Translations from Greek into Latin and Arabic during the Middle Ages: Searching for the Classical Tradition', in A. Brown and B. Neil (eds) *Byzantine Culture in Translation*. Byzantina Australiensia 21 (Leiden), 126–155.

Morani, M. (1981) *La Tradizione manoscritta del* De natura hominis *di Nemesio* (Milan).

Munitiz, J. (1999) 'Anastasios of Sinai's Teaching on the Body and Soul', in L. James (ed.) *Desire and Denial in Byzantium. Papers from the Thirty-First Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, University of Sussex, Brighton, March 1997* (Aldershot), 49–56.

Neil, B. (2015) 'Divine Providence and the Gnomic Will before Maximus the Confessor', in P. Allen and B. Neil (eds) *The Oxford Handbook of Maximus the Confessor* (Oxford), 235–249.

Papathanassiou, M. (2006) 'Stephanos of Alexandria: A Famous Byzantine Scholar, Alchemist and Astrologer', in P. Magdalino and M. Mavroudi (eds) *The Occult Sciences in Byzantium* (Geneva), 163–203.

Parry, K. (2017a) 'Fate, Free Choice, and Divine Providence, from the Neoplatonists to John of Damascus', in A. Kaldellis and N. Siniossoglou (eds) *The Cambridge Intellectual History of Byzantium* (Cambridge), 341–361.

Parry, K. (2017b) 'Providence, Resurrection, and Restoration in Byzantine Thought, Eighth to Ninth Centuries', in M. Vincent (ed.) *Studia Patristica XCVII, Volume 23: From the Fourth Century Onwards* (*Latin Writers*)*; Nachleben* (Leuven), 295–304.

Renehan, R. (1984) 'Meletius' Chapter on the Eyes: An Unidentified Source', *Dumbarton Oakes Papers* 38, 159–168.

Rist, J. M. (1998) 'Pseudo-Ammonius and the Soul/Body Problem in Some Platonic Texts of Late Antiquity', *The American Journal of Philology* 109(3), 402–415.

Rocca, J. (2003) *Galen on the Brain* (Leiden).

Roueché, M. (2016) 'A Philosophical Portrait of Stephanus the Philosopher', in R. Sorabji (ed.) *Aristotle Re-Interpreted: New Finds on Seven Hundred Years of the Ancient Commentators* (London), 541–563.

Samir, K. (1986) 'Les Versions arabes de Némésius de Ḥomṣ', in M. Pavan and U. Cozzoli (eds) *L'Eredità classica nelle lingue orientali*. Acta encyclopaedica 5 (Rome), 99–151.

Scarborough, J. (2013) 'Theodora, Aetius of Amida, and Procopius: Some Possible Connections', *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 53, 742–762.

Skiadas, P. K. and Lascaratos, J. G. (2001) 'Dietetics in Ancient Greek Philosophy: Plato's Concepts of Healthy Diet', *European Journal of Clinical Nutrition* 55, 532–537.

Smith, C. U. M. et al. (2012) *The Animal Spirit Doctrine and the Origins of Neurophysiology* (Oxford).

Talbot, A. M. (1991) 'Meletius the Monk', in *ODB*, ed. A. Kazhdan, 3 vols (Oxford), 1333.

Todd, R. B. (1984) 'Philosophy and Medicine in John Philoponus' Commentary on Aristotle's "De Anima"', *Dumbarton Oakes Papers* 38, 103–110.

Wilcox, J. (1985) 'The transmission and influence of Qusta ibn Luca's *On the Difference Between Spirit and Soul*'. Unpublished PhD thesis, City University (New York).

Wilcox, J. (1987) 'Our Continuing Discovery of the Greek Science of the Arabs: The Example of Qusṭā ibn Lūqā', *Annals of Scholarship* 4(3), 57–74.

Wolska-Conus, W. (1989) 'Stéphanos d'Athènes et Stéphanos d'Alexandrie: Essai d'identification et de biographie', *Revue des études byzantines* 47, 5–89.

Zonta, M. (1991) 'Nemesiana Syriaca: New Fragments from the Missing Syriac Version of the *De Natura Hominis*', *Journal of Semitic Studies* 36(2), 223–258.

Zonta, M. (2014) 'Iwānnīs of Dārā's Treatise on the Soul and its Sources: A New Contribution to the History of Syriac Psychology around 800 AD', in E. Coda and C. Martini Bonadeo (eds) *De l'Antiquité tardive au Moyen Âge. Études de logique aristotélicienne et de philosophie grecque, syriaque, arabe et latine offertes à Henri Hugonnard-Roche*. Études musulmanes 44 (Paris), 113–122.

CHAPTER 3

Daydreaming and Lusting after the Divine: Clement of Alexandria and the Platonic Tradition

Eva Anagnostou-Laoutides

Clement of Alexandria and his student Origen greatly influenced Byzantine Christian ethics, albeit often in controversial ways, especially by infusing their interpretations of Scripture with their re-workings of Platonic and Stoic moral theses.[1] Clement "readily syncretized pagan and Jewish thought",[2] through his concept of Logos-Christ, while Origen also employed Jewish traditions in his expounding of the Scriptures.[3] Recently, Rosen-Zvi discussed a number of Hellenistic authors who, in his view, employed aspects of the Jewish concept of the *yetzer hara* (inclination to evil) when discussing destructive sexual desire.[4] Rosen-Zvi begins his discussion with the Pseudo-Clementine *Homilies* before turning to Clement and finally engaging with Origen's "systematic demonological anthropology".[5] Rosen-Zvi admits that it was in the later, Amoraic, sources that human inclination (*yetzer*) became "increasingly demonic",[6] and that its sexual aspects are mainly developed in the Babylonian Talmud.[7] Without denying the self-confessed familiarity of Hellenistic thinkers with Jewish thought, I wish here to draw attention to the pagan, Platonic paradigms available to Clement and Origen with regard to the destructive influence of sexuality and its perception as demonic attack on the soul.

Erotic dreams offer an unsuspected yet most fruitful lens for examining the transition from paganism to Christianity. Already in the third century BCE, Herophilus had differentiated between god-sent dreams and those arising from the human soul. He also identified a third type of dream, the mixed type,

1 Golden (1974, 12–13) explains the relationship between classical allegorical interpretation and biblical exegesis by stressing Philo's use of Neoplatonic criticism in his commentaries on *Genesis*. Philo's method resembled the exegesis used by early Christian writers, such as Clement and Origen who had developed a method for interpreting the pagan classics (especially Homer) in Christian terms.

2 Wagner 2013, 263.

3 Malaty 1994, 798.

4 Rosen-Zvi 2011, 36–43.

5 Rosen-Zvi 2011, 38.

6 Rosen-Zvi 2011, 37.

7 Rosen-Zvi 2011, 102–120; cf. Hirschman 2013, 144–146.

© KONINKLIJKE BRILL NV, LEIDEN, 2018 | DOI:10.1163/9789004375710_005

when people dream of things they wish for, as "in the case of those who in their sleep make love to the women they love".[8] Herophilus, whom Origen mentions by name,[9] influenced the Christian association of sexual dreams with demonic attacks.[10] However, in my view, the connection is already accomplished in the Platonic corpus, especially in the *Republic*, where Socrates describes how the tyrant progressively abolishes the distinction between dreaming and fantasising about transgression, including sexual transgression, and acting on his impulses. A thorough and sensitive reader of Plato, Clement was not unobservant of the Platonic association of lust with dreaming.

In his *Stromata* Clement associates the mortal condition with dreaming when describing Christ's descent into flesh as "falling into sleep" and his resurrection as "rising from a dream".[11] He particularly associates sexual urges with dreaming, for example, in the familiar story of the fallen angels who slept with mortal women as in a dream.[12] This association is confirmed in *Stromata* 4 where, while discussing love and the all-important issue of repression of desire, Clement cites Matthew 5:28[13] and adopts the view that lustful gazing is a most dangerous affliction that causes people to "daydream", that is, to succumb to inappropriate desires while awake, precisely the time when they are expected to be in control of their thoughts.[14] Immediately after this warning Clement relates the story of Bocchoris the Just who was asked to judge a dispute between a young man and a courtesan: although the two had agreed on a certain price for the woman's sexual favours, the man dreamt of having intercourse with her and thus, no longer needed her services. However, when she found out what had happened, she still demanded the fee for having fulfilled his desire even in a dream. Jokingly Bocchoris asked the young man to offer the courtesan the shadow of his purse containing the fee, thus paying "the image of a price for the embrace of an image" (εἴδωλον μισθώματος ἀποδιδόναι κελεύσας εἰδώλου συμπλοκῆς).[15]

8 Aëtius, *Plac.* 5.2.3.21–3 (Diog. Laert. 416): ὡς ἐπὶ τῶν τὰς ἐρωμένας ὁρώντων ἐν ὕπνῳ γίνεται.

9 Or. *Sel. in Psalm*. Praef. (PG 12, 1053A7 and B2–3). On Herophilus' theory of dreams, see Stewart 2002, 289.

10 Von Staden 1989, 309–310.

11 *Str*. 5.14.105.4 (GCS 15, 397).

12 *Str*. 5.1.10.2 (GCS 15, 332); cf. *Str*. 3.7.59.2 (GCS 15, 223) and *Ped*. 3.2.14.2 (GCS 12, 244); Ashwin-Siejkowski 2010, 153.

13 Matthew 5:28: ἐγὼ δὲ λέγω, ὁ ἐμβλέψας τῇ γυναικὶ πρὸς ἐπιθυμίαν ἤδη μεμοίχευκεν ("But I'm telling you, whoever looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery").

14 *Str*. 4.18.114.2–115.1 (GCS 15, 298).

15 *Str*. 4.18.115.1–3 (GCS 15, 298–299).

As Colish has already pointed out,[16] the narrative alludes to the Stoic concept of *phantasia*, that is, the ability of the *hegemonikon* or *kurieuon* (the ruling faculty of the mind) to process impressions (states of awareness) which move the soul. Notably, the Stoics understand *phantasia* as an affection, a pathos that must be negotiated by reason and expressed through speech,[17] and their centuries-long disagreement with the academicians on cognitive *phantasia* is well-documented in scholarship.[18] Furthermore, Clement's text evokes the Rabbinic notion of *yetzer*, a demon which inhabits the human heart and which in the *Homilies* of pseudo-Clementine is transformed into numerous demons who attack people by suggesting a number of desires to them so as to urge them to forget their saviour.[19] Clement, however, who returns frequently in the *Stromata* to the topic of alluring pleasures—including pleasures of sight—that confront people in their dreams, urging them to indulgence and making the soul effeminate,[20] quotes Plato's conviction that "each pleasure and pain nails the soul to the body of him who does not set apart and crucify himself from the passions",[21] and points to the Platonic dialogues when recommending tireless resistance as the only way to overcome the attacks of the passions (διὰ τῆς ἀπαύστου καὶ ἀναπαυδήτου πρὸς τὰς τῶν παθῶν ἡμῶν ἀντιμαχήσεις), since Socrates had also stressed the constant dangers lurking in them.[22]

Furthermore, in the continuation of his argument against lustful dreams in book 4, Clement argues in strikingly Platonic spirit that those who look on beauty in chaste love, use the body as a vehicle to contemplate true, spiritual beauty.[23]

---

16 Colish 1985, 1.52–3; cf. De Harven 2017.

17 Sextus *M* 8.70 (Mutschmann 1914, 117); *DL* 7.63 (LCL 185, 172).

18 Szívós 2005, 208–223; Leahy 1994, 164–165; Watson 1988, 216; also, see Moss 2012, 274–277. For Zeno's definition of *phantasia*, see Cic. *Acad.* 1.11.40 (LCL 268, 448).

19 Rosen-Zvi 2011, 36–37.

20 Cf. *Str.* 7.7.36.4 (GCS 17, 28).

21 *Str.* 2.20.108.2–4 (GCS 15, 172): κατὰ Πλάτωνα, ὅτι ἑκάστη ἡδονή τε καὶ λύπη προσπασσαλοῖ τῷ σώματι τὴν ψυχὴν τοῦ γε μὴ ἀφορίζοντος καὶ ἀποσταυροῦντος ἑαυτὸν τῶν παθῶν….

22 *Str.* 2.20.120.5 (GCS 15, 178): ὁ γοῦν Σωκράτης φυλάσσεσθαι κελεύει τὰ ἀναπείθοντα μὴ πεινῶντας ἐσθίειν καὶ μὴ διψῶντας πίνειν καὶ τὰ βλέμματα καὶ τὰ φιλήματα τῶν καλῶν ὡς χαλεπώτερον σκορπίων καὶ φαλαγγίων ἰὸν ἐνιέναι πεφυκότα. "Besides, Socrates urges us to watch out against the things that tempt us to eat when we are not hungry and to drink when we are not thirsty and against the glances and kisses of handsome youths as they can inject poison more dangerous than scorpions and tarantulas" (trans. ANF 2, 373 modified). Cf. Xen. *Mem.* 1.3.5–6 (LCL 168, 55, 56); Stob. *Flor.* 17.44 (Wachsmuth and Hense 1894, 3:510, line 20–511, line 9); Plut. *De tuenda* 124D4–E3 (LCL 222, 228), *De garr.* 513D and *De cur.* 521F (LCL 337, 458 and 508).

23 *Str.* 4.18.116.1–117.1 (GCS 15, 299; trans. ANF 2, 430 modified).

> Ὀνειρώττει μὲν οὖν τις συγκαταθεμένης τῇ φαντασίᾳ τῆς ψυχῆς, ὕπαρ δὲ ὀνειρώττει ὁ πρὸς ἐπιθυμίαν βλέπων, οὐ μόνον ὡς ἐκεῖνος ἔλεγεν ὁ δῆθεν γνωστικός, ἐὰν ἅμα τῇ ὄψει τῆς γυναικὸς συλλάβῃ κατ' ἔννοιαν τὴν ὁμιλίαν (τοῦτο γὰρ ἤδη ἔργον ἐστὶν ἐπιθυμίας ὡς ἐπιθυμίας), ἀλλ' ἐὰν εἰς κάλλος σώματος βλέψῃ τις, ὁ λόγος φησί, καὶ αὐτῷ ἡ σὰρξ εἶναι κατ' ἐπιθυμίαν δόξῃ καλή, σαρκικῶς ἰδὼν καὶ ἁμαρτητικῶς δι' οὗ τεθαύμακεν κρίνεται· ἔμπαλιν γὰρ ὁ δι' ἀγάπην τὴν ἁγνὴν προσβλέπων τὸ κάλλος οὐ τὴν σάρκα ἡγεῖται, ἀλλὰ τὴν ψυχὴν καλήν, τὸ σῶμα, οἶμαι, ὡς ἀνδριάντα θαυμάσας, δι'οὗ κάλλους ἐπὶ τὸν τεχνίτην καὶ τὸ ὄντως καλὸν αὐτὸς αὑτὸν παραπέμπει, σύμβολον ἅγιον τὸν χαρακτῆρα τῆς δικαιοσύνης τὸν φωτεινὸν ἐπιδεικνύμενος τοῖς ἐφεστῶσι τῇ ἀνόδῳ ἀγγέλοις, τὸ χρῖσμα τῆς εὐαρεστήσεως λέγω, τὴν ποιότητα τῆς διαθέσεως τὴν ἐπικειμένην τῇ ψυχῇ κατ' ἐπιχώρησιν τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος γεγανωμένῃ.
>
> Accordingly, one dreams while the soul consents to the vision. But he who looks with lustful intent, daydreams; not only, as that Gnostic said, if along with the sight of the woman he imagines intercourse in his mind (for this is already the doing of lust, as lust); but if one looks on a beautiful body, the Word says, and the flesh seems to him fair according to (the criteria of) lust, looking on carnally and sinfully, he is judged because of what he admired. For, on the other hand, he who looks on beauty in chaste love, regards beautiful not the flesh but the soul, admiring the body, as I reckon, as an image through the beauty of which he transports himself to the Artist and true beauty; displaying the sacred symbol, the bright mark of righteousness to the angels that wait on the ascension; I mean the unction of acceptance, the quality of disposition which resides in the soul that is gladdened by the communication of the Holy Spirit.

This passage of Clement seems to resonate with Agathon's idealistic portrayal of Eros in the *Symposium* where he insists that Love is neither the cause nor the victim of any injustice.[24] Agathon praises Love's power over all other pleasures *and* passions and his unique ability to moderate them; Love is, in his view, the bravest of all gods[25] and extremely wise because it was "through love of beauty that Love imparted to gods and men all kinds of benefits".[26] By bringing peace among people,[27] Love "is our most excellent skipper and crew leader, our

24 *Symp*. 196b (LCL 166, 156): … Ἔρως οὔτ' ἀδικεῖ οὔτ' ἀδικεῖται, οὔτε ὑπὸ θεοῦ οὔτε θεόν, οὔτε ὑπ' ἀνθρώπου οὔτε ἄνθρωπον.

25 *Symp*. 196c8–d4 (LCL 166, 156).

26 *Symp*. 197b2–3 (LCL 166, 158): … ἐκ τοῦ ἐρᾶν τῶν καλῶν πάντ' ἀγαθὰ γέγονεν καὶ θεοῖς καὶ ἀνθρώποις.

27 *εἰρήνην*, *Symp*. 197c5 (LCL 166, 158).

defender and saviour … the fairest and best leader".[28] Socrates, of course, soon rejects Agathon's view of Eros by emphasising its deficient nature:[29] through his discussion with the priestess Diotima, Socrates is convinced that Eros lacks beauty and goodness.[30] His revised portrayal of Eros complements Diotima's conviction that he is a daemon[31] whose lacking nature allows him to be a mediating spirit between gods and humans (rather than a god).[32] Besides, in the *Timaeus* Plato argued that learning and true thoughts can lead us to *eudaimonia*, a state in which our inner good *daimon* comes to the fore.[33] Clement, who steadfastly believed that evil in the world is the result of sinful rather than demonic evil, was very aware of Plato's description of our inner *daimon*:[34]

> αὐτὸς δὲ ὁ Πλάτων τὴν εὐδαιμονίαν τὸ εὖ τὸν δαίμονα ἔχειν, δαίμονα δὲ λέγεσθαι τὸ τῆς ψυχῆς ἡμῶν ἡγεμονικόν, τὴν δὲ εὐδαιμονίαν τὸ τελειότατον ἀγαθὸν καὶ πληρέστατον λέγει. ὁτὲ δὲ βίον ὁμολογούμενον καὶ σύμφωνον αὐτὴν ἀποκαλεῖ, καὶ ἔσθ' ὅτε τὸ κατ' ἀρετὴν τελειότατον, τοῦτο δὲ ἐν ἐπιστήμῃ τοῦ

28 *Symp*. 197e1–2 (LCL 166, 160): … κυβερνήτης, ἐπιβάτης, παραστάτης τε καὶ σωτὴρ ἄριστος,…, ἡγεμὼν κάλλιστος καὶ ἄριστος.

29 In keeping with Eryximachus' distinction between "nobler and baser Loves" (186d3–7, LCL 166, 124), Plato maintains Eros' duality in the *Phaedrus* where we hear that love can be either harmful, effecting confusion and irrational behaviour on the soul (*Phdr*. 237d3–238a; 238b–c; 239c, LCL 36, 444–450) or the greatest good, when bestowed by divine gift (*Phdr*. 244a, LCL 36, 464). Later the Stoics furthered this concept by proposing that the philosopher is the doctor of the soul (Nussbaum 1998, 316). Although Plato employs the image of the charioteer and the two horses (*Phdr*. 249d–e, LCL 36, 482) to emphasise the need for individuals to adhere to reason and the right kind of love, while the Stoics view the human soul as unified with the body (Long 1982, 36–40), their understanding of irrational behaviour is fairly similar, with Plato referring to the ideal lovers as able to control their irrational propensities (*Phdr*. 238b, LCL 36, 446; cf. 250e–251a, 254 and 256, LCL 36, 484–486, 494–498 and 500–502) and Chrysippus describing passions as irrational and unnatural movements of the soul (*PHP* iv 2.10–12 and 14–18, De Lacy 2005, 240 and 242); see Long 1982, 49–53 on Stoic "rational souls" and Cooper 2005, 180–5 on the εὔλογος ἔκκλισις, the well-reasoned desire of the Stoic sage.

30 *Symp*. 203c7–d (LCL 166, 180).

31 Cf. Ap.Rhod. *Arg*. 4.445–9 (LCL 1, 364).

32 *Symp*. 203e1–7 (LCL 166, 180); Lamascus 2016, 70.

33 See *Tim*. 90c (LCL 234, 246). Xenocrates, Plato's student, conceptualised demons as dark, lustful forces. Plutarch describes Kronos as a divine being who in his dreams obtains mantic knowledge from Zeus and conveys it to daemons (Plut. *De fac*. 941F–942B1, LCL 406, 186, 188; Bos 1989, 94–96, 102). In his *Statesman* and the *Laws*, Plato, as Bos (1989, 97) pointed out, had presented Kronos as a world *archon* assisted by a host of daemons, each responsible for governing a part of the cosmos (*Pol*. 269a–274d, LCL 164, 48–66; *Leg*. 4.713b, LCL 187, 282 and 284).

34 *Str*. 2.22.131.4–6 (GCS 15, 185; trans. *ANF* 2, 375–376 modified); also, see *Resp*. 620d–e2 (LCL 276, 484) and *Str*. 5.14.130.3 (GCS 15, 414); Recinová 2012, 104–106.

> ἀγαθοῦ τίθεται καὶ ἐν ἐξομοιώσει τῇ πρὸς τὸν θεόν, ὁμοίωσιν ἀποφαινόμενος δίκαιον καὶ ὅσιον μετὰ φρονήσεως εἶναι.
>
> Plato himself says that happiness is to possess the daemon properly, where daemon is called the ruling faculty of the soul and happiness he names the most perfect and complete good. Sometimes he calls it a life consistent and harmonious, sometimes the highest perfection in accordance with virtue; and this he places in the knowledge of the Good, and in likeness to God, demonstrating likeness to be justice and holiness with wisdom.

In the first book of his *Stromata* Clement describes Greek philosophy as a gift communicated to people by fallen angels in terms that recall Plato's description of Eros as a divine gift.[35] In book 7 he shifts his opinion to claim that Greek philosophy was communicated by Logos himself through the medium of inferior good angels.[36] Accordingly, in disagreement with the Gnostics, he believed that the gap between a transcendent God and the visible Word was not bridged by intermediary demons, but by Logos himself[37]—and possibly those elucidated ones, like himself, who achieved assimilation to Logos. Again, one is reminded of Plato's urge of human assimilation to God, which according to Gibbons, Clement promotes albeit by employing Stoic thoughts.[38] Similarly, as Gaca has noted,[39] Clement, afraid of Erotic gods, tends to invest his Logos with Stoic qualities. Yet, in my view, Clement could not have been impervious to the Middle Platonic understanding of Logos as noeric-erotic intermediary. Plutarch whom Clement had certainly read (at least to an extent)[40] argued that in this guise Logos imposed order on chaos and was able to lead the finite mind up by intellectual love to the reality of pure ideas.[41] Furthermore, Clement discusses God as revealing through his Logos a passionate love for the human race; through God's love, Clement has transformed himself to God's Logos and urges others to surrender themselves to Christ's divine love through his *Logos*

35 *Str.* 1.17.81.4 (GCS 15, 53); cf. 1.17.87.1 (GCS 15, 55). Recinová 2012, 111.

36 *Str.* 7.2.6.4 (GCS 17, 6): οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ διδοὺς καὶ τοῖς Ἕλλησι τὴν φιλοσοφίαν διὰ τῶν ὑποδεεστέρων ἀγγέλων; see Recinová 2012, 111.

37 Recinová 2012, 109.

38 Gibbons 2015, 157–185.

39 Gaca 2003, 266.

40 Ferguson 1974, 18–19; Patrick 1914, 27.

41 Dillon 1996, 200–201.

Protreptikos.[42] Clement's Platonic appreciation of divine revelation is further confirmed in his visions, especially his allegorical dream visions[43] which freely evoke Plato's famous discussion of mystical visions in the *Phaedrus* as inspired by various forms of *mania*.[44] In discussing the nature and meaning of sleep in the second book of the *Pedagogus*, Clement urged wakefulness during day and night:[45]

> Τὸ οὖν φῶς τοῦτο οἱ τοῦ φωτὸς τοῦ ἀληθινοῦ υἱοὶ μὴ ἀποκλείσωμεν θύραζε, ἔνδον δὲ εἰς ἡμᾶς ἀποστρέψαντες, τοῦ κεκρυμμένου τὰς ὄψεις ἀνθρώπου φωτίσαντες τήν τε ἀλήθειαν αὐτὴν ἐποπτεύσαντες καὶ τῶν ταύτης ῥευμάτων μεταλαμβάνοντες, τοὺς ἀληθεῖς τῶν ὀνείρων ἐναργῶς καὶ φρονίμως ἀποκαλυπτώμεθα … ᾗ καὶ τῶν ὀνείρων οἱ ἀληθεῖς ὀρθῶς λογιζομένῳ νηφούσης εἰσὶ ψυχῆς λογισμοὶ ἀπερισπάστου τὸ τηνικάδε οὔσης περὶ τὰς τοῦ σώματος συμπαθείας καὶ αὐτῆς αὑτῇ τὰ κράτιστα συμβουλευούσης·
>
> We, then, who are sons of the true light, should not close the door against this light, but turning in on ourselves, illumining the eyes of the hidden man, and gazing on the truth itself, and receiving its streams, we should clearly and intelligibly reveal such dreams as are true.... Thus also, such dreams as are true, in the view of him who reflects correctly, are the thoughts of a sober soul, undistracted in this case by the affections of the body, and counselling with itself in the best manner.

Clement draws here on Plato's *Phaedo* (airing the idea of the soul's emancipation from the body at the point of death) to defend his view that Gnosis is a kind of rational death that separates the spirit from the passions[46] and

---

42 Hofer 2015, 516; for Logos as love, see Vigorelli 2016, 154–155. For Clement's investment of divine Eros in his *Protrepticus* with Platonic concepts discussed in the *Symposium*, see Alieva 2016, 685–686.

43 MacDermot 1971, 17–19.

44 *Phdr*. 244a–e, 265b (LCL 36, 464–468 and 532); Ashwin-Siejkowski 2008, 181 n. 181. See *Str*. 1.21.143.1–5 (GCS 15, 88): ὁ Πλάτων δὲ καὶ τοῖς θεοῖς διάλεκτον ἀπονέμει τινά, μάλιστα μὲν ἀπὸ τῶν ὀνειράτων τεκμαιρόμενος καὶ τῶν χρησμῶν, ἄλλως δὲ καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν δαιμονώντων, οἳ τὴν αὑτῶν οὐ φθέγγονται φωνὴν οὐδὲ διάλεκτον, ἀλλὰ τὴν τῶν ὑπεισιόντων δαιμόνων. ("Plato attributes a dialect also to the gods, making this inference mainly from dreams and oracles, and especially from the demoniacs, who do not speak their own language or dialect, but that of the demons who have taken possession of them;" trans. ANF 2, 332 modified).

45 *Ped*. 2.9.80.4 and 2.9.82.2 (GCS 12, 206–207; trans. ANF 2, 258–259 modified). For dreams as an indication of the degree to which the soul can act independently of the body, see Itter 2009, 189–190.

46 *Str*. 7.12.71.3 (GCS 17, 51).

crucially, that, to maintain this separation, the wise man should practise wakefulness: "We, then, who assign the best part of the night to wakefulness, must by no manner of means sleep by day."[47]

Still, Clement appreciates his visions as a divine gift in agreement with the influential Gnostic Valentinus[48] who claimed to have received his visions from Logos himself and whom Clement quotes six times.[49] Therefore, it is unlikely, even if Clement was aware of *yetzer hara* (and indeed he probably was, given his interest in Jewish theology),[50] that he would have chosen to include the concept in his theology which ultimately defends a positive creation. As is clear from the texts quoted above, Clement's difficulty is not with receiving divine revelation in dreams but with allowing oneself to dream while awake, what we may call "daydreaming".[51]

This, I argue, is very Platonic and can be found in the *Republic* where Plato argues that the innate badness of evil in our soul[52]—manifesting itself as injustice, licentiousness, cowardice and ignorance (609b)—is essentially external (610b–c).[53] Plato describes daydreaming when discussing the metaphor of *anamnesis*, thoughts which are memories of our acquaintance with Platonic ideas in an earlier existence.[54] Plato asks: "Is not the dream state, whether the man is asleep or awake, just this: the mistaking of resemblance for identity?"[55] In Socrates' analysis of the progressive moral decadence of the tyrant,[56] we hear about *epithumiai* (desires) and *hēdonai* (pleasures) manifesting in sleep. When the rational and domesticated part of our soul (λογιστικὸν … καὶ ἥμερον) rests, the other part that is beastly and savage (θηριῶδές τε καὶ ἄγριον), instigated by food and wine, rebels and seeks to satisfy its dispositions (ζητῇ ἰέναι καὶ ἀπο-

47 *Ped*. 2.9.81.5 (GCS 12, 207): πολλοῦ γε δεῖ μεθ' ἡμέραν ἐπιτρέπειν καθεύδειν τοῖς καὶ τῆς νυκτὸς τὸ πλεῖστον εἰς ἐγρήγορσιν ἀποτεμνομένοις.

48 Metzger 1987, 80.

49 Kovacs 2016, 328–329.

50 *Str*. 1.1.11.2 (GCS 15, 8) with Ashwin-Siejkowsk 2008, 23–24.

51 Cf. Quint. *Inst. Or*. 6.2.30 (LCL 126, 60) urging orators to use their ability to evoke images in people's minds to their benefit.

52 *Rep.* 609a10 (LCL 276, 444).

53 LCL 276, 444 and 446.

54 Dreams belong to a form of active sense-perception (*aesthesis*) which is not consistent with correct sense-perception. For example, when dreaming or daydreaming we are not aware of it; Sörbom 1994, 37–38; cf. Arist. *Insomn*. 458a13–b25 (LCL 288, 348, 350).

55 *Resp*. 476c (LCL 237, 550): τὸ ὀνειρώττειν ἆρα οὐ τόδε ἐστίν, ἐάντε ἐν ὕπνῳ τις ἐάντ' ἐγρηγορὼς τὸ ὅμοιόν τῳ μὴ ὅμοιον ἀλλ' αὐτὸ ἡγῆται εἶναι ᾧ ἔοικεν.

56 *Resp*. 571c (LCL 276, 308); Cf. *Tim*. 71a (LCL 234, 184): [ἐπιθυμητικὸν τῆς ψυχῆς] … ὑπὸ δὲ εἰδώλων καὶ φαντασμάτων νυκτός τε καὶ μεθ' ἡμέραν μάλιστα ψυχαγωγήσοιτο … (["the appetitive part of the soul] … would be bewitched for the most part both day and night by images and phantasms").

πιμπλάναι τὰ αὐτοῦ ἤθη). In this state, Socrates warns, the soul is released from all sense of shame and reason (ἀπὸ πάσης … αἰσχύνης καὶ φρονήσεως).

Clement seems to adopt Stoic positions in discussing the passions of the souls as "excessive impulse that exceeds the measure of reason, an impulse expressed as contrary to reason";[57] these passions "proceed from each man's own soul, aggravated by impious desires and various pleasures (ὑπὸ ἐπιθυμιῶν ἀθέων καὶ ἡδονῶν ποικίλων), base hopes and corrupting dreams (φαύλων ἐλπίδων καὶ φθαρτικῶν ὀνειροπολημάτων), when, always lusting for more, maddened by fierce loves and on fire,… it is injured to states of frenzied obsessions, despair of life and contempt of God (ἐξαιμάσσηται πρὸς σπουδὰς μανιώδεις καὶ ζωῆς ἀπόγνωσιν καὶ θεοῦ καταφρόνησιν)".[58] However, Socrates' reflection on pleasures in book 9 of the *Republic* and their manifestations in dreams seems to add new insights to Clement's fear of daydreaming.[59] Socrates uses dreams to illustrate how unnecessary, unnatural desires[60] take hold of intemperate people, such as tyrants, in sleep. Still, as Holowchak pointed out,[61] Socrates prescribes certain measures by which the temperate man can achieve peaceful sleep and even rouse insightful dreams.[62] According to Socrates, the person who goes to sleep, having previously stirred his rational faculty (τὸ λογιστικόν) with fair words and thoughts (λόγων καλῶν καὶ σκέψεων) and has made peace with himself (εἰς σύννοιαν αὐτὸς αὑτῷ ἀφικόμενος), but at the same time has been careful not to starve or overindulge the appetitive part of his soul (τὸ ἐπιθυμητικὸν δὲ μήτε ἐνδείᾳ δοὺς μήτε πλησμονῇ), is least likely to have wicked dreams and more likely to learn something about past, present, or future things.[63] In fact, "in this state one comes closest to the truth and the visions of one's dreams appear to

57 *Str*. 2.13.59.6 (GCS 14, 145): πάθος δὲ πλεονάζουσα ὁρμὴ ἢ ὑπερτείνουσα τὰ κατὰ τὸν λόγον μέτρα, ἢ ὁρμὴ ἐκφερομένη καὶ ἀπειθὴς λόγῳ; on the Stoic theory of passions and its reception in early Christianity, see Anagnostou-Laoutides 2014, 276–277. Aristotle describes appetite (a precursor of will) as inclined to obey mostly irrational instincts; see Tympas 2014, 121 with n. 18 (on his p. 128) citing Gauthier 1954, 58, Bathrellos 2004, 125, and Thunberg 1995, 221–224.

58 *Rich Man's Salvation* 25.4 (GCS 17, 176); trans. modified from LCL 92, 322 (cf. ANF 2, 598). Also, see Karavites 1999, 37–38 with n. 66 citing *SVF* 3.378–379 and 462 (von Arnim 1967, 92 and 113).

59 As we saw in *Resp*. 571 (LCL 276, 306 and 308) discussed above.

60 Necessary desires are those of which we cannot rid ourselves and which are beneficial when satisfied, such as simple food. Unnecessary desires are those from which we can free ourselves and which do us harm when satisfied, such as more delicate food or other luxuries (558c–559d, LCL 276, 260–266).

61 Holowchak 2009, 2.

62 *Resp*. 571d7–572a (LCL 276, 308).

63 *Resp*. 572a4 (LCL 276, 308).

be the least unlawful."[64] Notably, Socrates' description of the moderate man's pre-sleep habits is very similar to Clement's instructions for purifying the soul with sober thoughts while remaining in anticipation of god-sent dreams that reveal the truth. In his discussion of democratic and tyrannical personalities, Socrates uses dreams as the paramount evidence for a person turning into a tyrant;[65] when in the grip of illicit desires, people lose their ability to distinguish between reality and dreaming until they lead the kind of life which previously only surfaced in their dreams.[66]

Having Socrates' speech in the background, Clement's fear of daydreaming becomes clearer. Given that Clement is at pains to present Moses as an ideal statesman, an earthly embodiment of God's divine statesmanship,[67] it is crucial for his followers to acknowledge their true lord and avoid the tyranny of sin.[68] According to Gibbons, Clement wishes to argue that our assimilation to God should be a "unification of the civic and contemplative lives".[69]

Appreciating Plato's ambivalence regarding the actual involvement of the wise man in the civic life of the polis [think, for example, *Resp*. 592b (LCL 276, 388) where he mentions a heavenly city in whose politics the philosopher would be inclined to get involved], Clement turns to the all-important civic profile of the wise man in Stoicism. Clearly, as he states at the start of the *Stromata*, he wishes to write in order to offer an authoritative account of how we are to approximate God but Clement is not unaware of the civic structures through which divine wisdom will be enhanced and promoted. In this context, Gibbons argued that,[70]

---

64 *Resp*. 572a9–11 (LCL 276, 308 and 310): οἶσθ᾽ ὅτι τῆς τ᾽ ἀληθείας ἐν τῷ τοιούτῳ μάλιστα ἅπτεται καὶ ἥκιστα παράνομοι τότε αἱ ὄψεις φαντάζονται τῶν ἐνυπνίων.

65 *Resp*. 574d–e (LCL 276, 318 and 320).

66 Hence, in *Resp*. 574e2–4 (LCL 276, 320) we read: … τυραννευθεὶς δὲ ὑπὸ Ἔρωτος, οἷος ὀλιγάκις ἐγίγνετο ὄναρ, ὕπαρ τοιοῦτος ἀεὶ γενόμενος, οὔτε τινὸς φόνου δεινοῦ ἀφέξεται οὔτε βρώματος οὔτ᾽ ἔργου ("… under the tyranny of Eros, he becomes at all times during his waking life the kind of person that he rarely became in sleep, and he will refrain from no terrible murder nor from any food or deed"; my trans.). See Holowchak 2009, 3; Annas 1983, 303–304; cf. Rankin 1964, 82 also discussed by Holowchak on his p. 9.

67 Gibbons 2016, 49–68.

68 Cf. *Str*. 3.3.18.5 (GCS 15, 204): τῆς τε τῶν ἀφροδισίων χρήσεως ἐπιμνησθείς· εὐφήμει, ἄνθρωπε, ἀσμενέστατα μέντοι αὐτὸ ἀπέφυγον, ὥσπερ λυττῶντά τινα καὶ ἄγριον δεσπότην ἀποφυγών. ("And with reference to sexual relations: Be silent, O man, it is with the greatest joy that I escaped from it as if I had escaped from a wild and raging tyrant"), discussing sexual intercourse as a tyrant and quoting Plato's *Resp*. 329c (LCL 237, 10); Ferguson 1974, 161.

69 Gibbons 2015, 157 (abstract).

70 Gibbons 2015, 175.

> Clement reinterprets the Statesman so that, contra that dialogue's literal denial that the rule of the statesman is similar in kind to that of God, this particular dialogue serves to further the idea that the person who assimilates to God is, like Moses, the true king, lawgiver, and statesman.

In the *Republic* Plato argues that only when philosophers become rulers and rulers become philosophers will justice be established in the *polis*.[71] In the *Theaetetus*, where he discusses the ideal of the philosopher's assimilation to God, on which Clement was keen,[72] Socrates specifies that philosophers do not dream of political offices and carnal pleasures,[73] while in *Cratylus*, he describes his own dreams as preoccupied with the good and the beautiful.[74] Clement, however, as we saw, insisted that the virtuous man must serve as an example and actively assist others to communicate with God.[75] Given that dreams were such an important pathway for divine revelations, Clement's anxiety to stipulate the circumstances in which divine dreams may be received is in keeping with Socrates' provisos about dreams. Like Socrates, Clement was at pains to reject "daydreaming" and lustful fantasies as an appropriate or reliable way of communicating with God.

1 Daydreaming in Origen, Eusebius and Evagrius

Origen often discussed lustful gazing at women, and twice quoted the Gospel saying: "[W]hosoever shall look upon a woman to lust after her, has already committed adultery with her in his heart" (Matt 5:28).[76] The notion is repeated often in his corpus,[77] but is not associated with dreams. Origen returns to the topic of dreams in *Contra Celsum* where he defends the visions of the Bible,

---

71 *Resp*. 473c11–e1 (LCL 237, 538 and 540); Holowchak 2009, 7–8.

72 *Tht*. 176b2 (ὁμοίωσις θεῷ; LCL 123, 128); Gibbons 2015, 158–159.

73 *Tht*. 173d4–6 (LCL 123, 118): σπουδαὶ δὲ ἑταιριῶν ἐπ᾽ ἀρχὰς καὶ σύνοδοι καὶ δεῖπνα καὶ σὺν αὐλητρίσι κῶμοι, οὐδὲ ὄναρ πράττειν προσίσταται αὐτοῖς ("the fuss and meetings of political clubs for offices, banquets and revels with singing girls"; trans. LCL 123, 119 modified); Holowchak 2009, 11. Note that Holowchak argues that the philosophers "do not hear spoken or written laws and decrees in their dreams", but the actual text at this point refers to the habits of the leaders of the city, not their dreams.

74 *Cra*. 439c7–8 (LCL 167, 186).

75 Gibbons 2015, 159 with *Str*. 7.13.81.3–82.4 (GCS 17, 58).

76 *Principiis* 3.1.6 and 4.3.19 (GCS 22, 202 and 328).

77 For example, in the *Homilies on Genesis* 1.8.25–26 (GCS 29, 10) gazing lustfully at a woman is described as a poisonous reptile in us; cf. *Hom. Gen*. 3.6 (GCS 29, 46–47); *Hom. Josh*. 9.3 (GCS 30, 348); *Hom. Luc*. 2 (GCS 35, 16); *Hom. Num*. 11.2 (GCS 30, 79).

often received while awake.[78] Although he seems to contradict Clement who doubted the value of waking visions, Origen referred to those who believe in divine providence and therefore were spiritually ready to receive divine revelations "involving all of their senses, as if they were in an objective state of mind".[79] Furthermore, in his attempt to defend Christ whom Celsus had accused as a "dreamer of dreams",[80] Origen distinguished between valid prophetic visions and "waking dreams", arguing that although it is not irrational to believe that a dream may take place, "to suppose a waking vision in the case of those who are not altogether out of their senses, and under the influence of madness or melancholy is incredible" (ὕπαρ δὲ ἐπὶ τῶν μὴ πάντῃ ἐκφρόνων καὶ φρενιτιζόντων ἢ μελαγχολώντων οὐ πιθανόν).[81]

Celsus, Origen continues, was inspired to talk against dreams by Mary Magdalen's alleged encounter with Christ after his resurrection, which he dismissed "calling the woman half-mad" (παροιστρῶσαν εἶπε τὴν γυναῖκα).[82] Notably, in his attempt to defend the resurrection of Christ, surely not a mere apparition or a trick of Mary's imagination, Origen quotes Plato and his doctrine on the immortality of the soul. Although Origen believed that only the Holy Spirit can induce true revelations,[83] yet, as Chadwick noted, his distinction between divine and demonic inspiration is largely based on Plato's *Timaeus* 71 (LCL 234:184, 186) and *Phaedrus* 244 (LCL 36:464–468) where divine inspiration is said to purify but not excite the mind.[84] Furthermore, Origen believed that the pagan methods of predicting the future whether involving the loss of self-control as in the case of Pythia or relying on animal augury[85] were derived from demons who were thus trying to entice men into error and prevent them from seeking God—a view that echoes the thoughts of his teacher, Clement.[86]

78 *CC* 1.48 (GCS 2, 97–100); Origen also cites many examples of people who were converted to Christianity because of a dream revelation; see *CC* 1.46 (GCS 2, 95–96); also, cf. *CC* 1.66 (GCS 2, 119–121) discussing dreams of angels giving instructions to people.

79 See Kofsky 2002, 146, n. 41 discussing *CC* 1.48 (see previous note).

80 *CC* 2.53 (GCS 2, 176–177).

81 *CC* 2.60 (GCS 2, 183, lines 13–14; trans. ANF 4, 455 modified).

82 *CC* 2.60 (GCS 2, 183, line 15; trans. ANF 4, 455). For Jesus' appearance to Mary Magdalen, see, for example, John 20:11–18 and Mark 16:9.

83 Kofsky 2002, 146.

84 Chadwick 1953, 397, n. 2 with Kofsky 2002, 146, n. 41.

85 *CC* 4.92–93 and 7.3–4 respectively (GCS 2, 365–367 and GCS 3, 154–157).

86 For more on Origen's demonology, see Stewart 2005, esp. 10–11. Despite his self-castration which brought him into disfavour with the Church (though many scholars appreciate it as a myth created by his distractors; for example, McGuckin 2004, 7), Origen maintained

Important insights regarding Clement's Platonic understanding of dreams can be also derived from the work of Eusebius of Caesarea who developed a theory according to which demons were tyrannical rulers, who enslaved and oppressed the people under their power. He describes demons as hating the good and suffering from madness, much like the Platonic tyrant.[87] In the past, he tells us, "demons ruled all the nations as tyrants"[88] until Christ saved them.[89] Similar to Clement, Eusebius associates the Christian God with freedom, presenting Christ as offering people the chance of liberation from the demonic tyranny they had suffered.[90] Eusebius believes that demons caused people to submit to the "impassioned portion of their soul"[91] urging them, among other things, to sexual impurity and indulgence in shameful and intemperate pleasure.[92]

Given the importance of tyrannical demons in Eusebius' understanding of history which, as Johannessen contends,[93] challenges the widespread scholarly view that Eusebius believed all demonic power to have ceased with the incarnation, it seems that Eusebius considered virtuous exemplary Christian leadership of both church and empire to be essential in an ongoing struggle to resist demonic influence, again echoing Clement's ideas. Eusebius' support for earthly rulers, in particular Constantine, was by no means unconditional;[94] rather he demanded a particular high standard of "orthodox" piety from those wishing to be seen as true leaders. Only in this way would the emperor be able to perform the essential role of leading his subjects on the journey toward salvation. Thus, in praising Constantine, Eusebius credited the emperor with "thousands of theophanies of your saviour, thousands of appearances in

---

his popularity as an exemplar of spiritual virtuosity among ascetics. See Olson 2007, 89; Baghos 2015, 82–103.

87 See *misokalos* in *HE* 9.2.1 and 9.6.4 (GCS 9/2, 806, line 19 and 812, line 16); see *mania* in *HE* 9.9.2; 9.9.12; 9.10.2; 10.4.14; 10.8.9 (GCS 9/2, 828, line 3; 832, line 15; 838, line 25; 867, line 7; 894, lines 16–17); Johannessen 2016, 85 with n. 36. Also, cf. Pl. *Resp*. 573b and c3–5 (LCL 276, 312 and 314).

88 *PE* 1.4.5 (GCS 43/1, 15, line 23); cf. *Ecl. Proph*. 4.11 (Gaisford 1942, 190, lines 13–15); *Fr. Luc*. (PG 24, 553.B10–12 and C12–16).

89 *PE* 4.21.2 (GCS 43/1, 208). Notably in *PE* 4.22.1 (GCS 43/1, 210) Eusebius quotes Porphyry according to whom souls, unable to control the spirit in them, vexed by anger and desires, should be called daemons themselves.

90 *PE* 1.4.2 and 7.16.11 (GCS 43/1, 14 and 397); *DE* 3.1.2; 3.2.9; 9.10.7 (GCS 23, 94, 97, 427); Johannessen 2016, 86.

91 *PE* 7.2.2: τὸ παθητικὸν… μέρος τῆς ψυχῆς (GCS 43/1, 364, line 21).

92 *PE* 7.2.4 (GCS 43/1, 365); Johannessen 2016, 87.

93 Johannessen 2016, 139–170.

94 Johannessen 2016, 171–202.

dreams".[95] Elaborating on the work of Origen,[96] Eusebius argued that the ongoing grace of God ensures the veracity of the Hebrew oracles.[97] In addition, pagan oracular prophecy (*manteia*) emerged from a mental state characterised by a loss of the senses or at least a paralysis of the powers of reason resembling an epileptic fit (*mania* due to demonic attack). On the contrary, the nature of the divine spirit was like that of light, a most neoplatonic image which Clement entertains in the *Pedagogus*.[98]

Eusebius also speaks of diabolical dreams and dream-exciting demons.[99] Although his reliance on Philo and the Stoic notion of moral slavery has been discussed by Johannessen,[100] little attention has been paid to his familiarity with Clement and his Platonic understanding of moral tyranny, even though Clement and Origen were also influenced by Philo and despite the fact that Eusebius quotes Clement's *Protrepticus* occasionally.[101] A further clue may be the fact that Eusebius understands demons as the result of the sexual mingling of fallen angels with mortal women which Clement had also discussed.[102]

For Evagrius Ponticus, an avid reader of Origen's works who followed closely Plato's views on the tripartite scheme of the soul,[103] demons manipulate our emotionally charged memories which then excite our passions and give rise to sinful thoughts.[104] Evagrius, who became a monk in 382 CE, believed that even monks were inevitably confronted with disturbing thoughts but sin only occurred if these thoughts were entertained for too long.[105] As Stewart argued, Evagrius aimed for "inner stillness" for which he employed the "familiar Stoic term, *apatheia*"[106] Evagrius named eight primary demons which would eventually provide the model for the "seven deadly sins" in Western

95 *Tr*. 18.1 (GCS 7:259, lines 7–8); *Life of Const*. 1.47.3 (GCS 7, 29–30); see Nicholson 2000, 309.

96 Kofsky 2002, 145–146.

97 *PE* 7.5 (GCS 43/1, 368).

98 *Ped*. 1.6.28.1–3 (GCS 12, 106–107); cf. his *Ecl. Proph.* 5.3 (GCS 17, 138) and *Exc*. 1.3 (GCS 17, 105–106).

99 *HE* 4.7.9 (GCS 9/1, 312, line 2 refers to dream-exciting demons [ὀνειροπόμπους δαίμονας]); cf. Or. *Phil.* 6.20 (PG 16.3, 3226A8). Le Goff 1992, 212–213 discusses the importance of dreams in heresies which in turn increased the Church's mistrust of dreams with reference to *HE* 5.28.7–12 (GCS 9/2, 502).

100 Johannessen 2016, 181–182.

101 Johannessen 2016, 87, 61, 160; cf. Van Winden 1978, *passim*.

102 Yet, Johannessen (2016, 66) notes that at his time a number of other demonic genealogies existed.

103 Stewart 2005, 19–26; also, Stewart 2011, 264.

104 *Thoughts* 4 and 27–9 (SC 438, 162 and 245–256; Sinkewicz 2003, 155–156 and 172–174); cf. *Praktikos* 34 (SC 171, 578). Stewart 2002, 289–291; cf. Brakke 2006, 57–77.

105 *Praktikos* 6 (SC 171, 508, lines 7–8).

106 Stewart 2002, 289 citing SC 170, 98–112.

Christianity.[107] Each of these demons normally attacked only one of the two vulnerable parts of the soul, the high-spirited or the sensual. Predictably, the demon of fornication (*porneia*) attacked the sensual part of the soul, producing a confusion between reality and imagination, similar, in my view, to the confusion experienced by Plato's tyrant in the *Republic*. According to Evagrius,[108]

> Ὁ τῆς πορνείας δαίμων σωμάτων καταναγκάζει διαφόρων ἐπιθυμεῖν· καὶ σφοδρότερος τοῖς ἐγκρατευομένοις ἐφίσταται, ἵν' ὡς μηδὲν ἀνύοντες παύσωνται· καὶ τὴν ψυχὴν μιαίνων περὶ ἐκείνας κατακάμπτει τὰς ἐργασίας· λέγειν τε αὐτήν τινα ῥήματα καὶ πάλιν ἀκούειν ποιεῖ, ὡς ὁρωμένου δῆθεν καὶ παρόντος τοῦ πράγματος.
>
> The demon of fornication compels one to desire a number of bodies; it attacks more violently those who practise self-control in order to cause them to quit, as if accomplishing nothing. And, polluting the soul, it bends it down toward those acts. It makes it utter and also hear certain words, as if some object were visible and present.

Evagrius describes the sight of a woman as a poisoned arrow,[109] and advises avoiding encounters with women;[110] he is also wary of fantasising about women,[111] which when prolonged destroys the habit of chastity:[112]

> Ὅταν γυναικὸς μνήμη γένηται ἀπαθῶς, τότε νόμιζε τῶν ὅρων ἐπιβεβηκέναι τῆς σωφροσύνης. Ὅτε δέ σε τὸ εἴδωλον αὐτῆς ἐπὶ θεωρίαν διεγείρει, καὶ τὰ βέλη αὐτῆς τὴν ψυχήν σου περιλαμβάνουσι, τότε νόμιζε ἔξω εἶναι τῆς ἀρετῆς. Ἀλλὰ μηδὲ οὕτως ἐγχρονίσῃς τοῖς τοιούτοις λογισμοῖς, μηδὲ ἐπὶ πολὺ κατὰ διάνοιαν προσομιλήσῃς μορφῇ γυναικὸς, ἔστι γὰρ φιλυπόστροφον τὸ πάθος, καὶ

107 Stewart 2005, 16–18 and 26–33.

108 *Praktikos* 8 (SC 171, 510, 512); trans. Sinkewicz 2003, 98 modified. Also, see *Praktikos* 54–56 (SC 171, 625, 628 and 630); cf. Tilby 2009, 75–90.

109 *Eight Thoughts* 2.6 (= PG 79, 1148D10–1149A2).

110 *Eight Thoughts* 2.8 (= PG 79, 1149A5–C6); cf. 2.14–17 (= PG79, 1149D).

111 *Praktikos* 23 (SC 171, 554): Μὴ δῷς σεαυτὸν τῷ τῆς ὀργῆς λογισμῷ …· μηδ' αὖ πάλιν τῷ τῆς πορνείας ἐπὶ πλεῖστον τὴν ἡδονὴν φανταζόμενος· τὸ μὲν γὰρ ἐπισκοτεῖ τῇ ψυχῇ, τὸ δὲ πρὸς τὴν πύρωσιν τοῦ πάθους αὐτὴν προσκαλεῖται· "[Do not abandon yourself to your angry thoughts …] nor to that of fornication, by continually imagining pleasure. For the first obscures the soul, while the other incites it to let its passion flare up;" trans. Bamberger 1970, 22 modified. Also, see *Eulogios* 13.12 (Sinkewicz 2003, 317–318; trans. id., 39) where he discusses how the demon of lust induces "dream fantasies of intertwining with young girls" (νεάνισιν δι' ὀνειράτων συμπλέκεσθαι φαντάζει).

112 *Eight Thoughts* 2.19 (=PG 79, 1152A5–B1); trans. Sinkewicz 2003, 78 modified.

> τὸν κίνδυνον ἔχει ἐγγύς. Ὥσπερ γὰρ ἡ σύμμετρος χωνεία καθαίρει τὸν ἄργυρον, ἡ δὲ ἐπὶ πολὺ καὶ ἀπόλλυσιν εὐχερῶς, οὕτως ἕξιν σωφρονικὴν διαφθείρει ἐγχρονίζουσα φαντασία γυναικός·
>
> When the memory of a woman arises without passion, then consider that you have arrived at the boundaries of chastity; and when her image rouses you to consider it and you are able to compare her members to the faculties of your soul, then think that it is (nothing else) but (the sign of) virtue. But do not spend that long in such thoughts, nor discuss with the form of a woman in your mind for long, for this passion loves to cause backsliding, and danger is close at hand. As moderate smelting refines silver bur a prolonged process easily ruins it, so protracted fantasising about a woman destroys the habit of chastity.

The same notions, repeated in the next paragraph of the text,[113] have strong Clementian echoes, especially taking into account that Evagrius also advises moderation in food as a way of avoiding overexciting the concupiscent part of the soul.[114] The constitution of the human soul became the focus of intellectual debate during the following centuries with authors such as Nemesius of Emesa, a contemporary of Evagrius, and others contributing to the discussion, mainly from a medical perspective.[115]

2 Lustful Dreams in Maximus the Confessor

Evagrius' ideas, embraced mainly among the Syriac monastic communities,[116] were very influential on Maximus the Confessor,[117] a theologian venerated both in the eastern and western Church; hence, in his *Centuries on Charity* (*Capita de Caritate*) Maximus describes how demons employ the memory of a woman to arouse passion during sleep and how one can still overcome such challenges by exercising self-control:[118]

113 *Eight Thoughts* 2.20 = PG 79, 1152B.

114 Evagrius distinguishes between erotic dreams and nightmares although clearly at times the two types could be fused. Stewart 2002, 290.

115 See Graiver in Chapter 1 of this volume.

116 See Stewart 2011, 272 with n. 45 citing Guillaumont 2004, 99–159.

117 On the influence of Evagrius Ponticus on Maximus, see Paša 2010.

118 *Car*. 2.85 (PG 90, 1012B1–C2); trans. Berthold 1985, 59 modified.

> Τινές μέν φασιν, ὅτι τῶν μορίων τοῦ σώματος καθαπτόμενοι οἱ δαίμονες κατά τούς ὕπνους, κινοῦσι τό πάθος τῆς πορνείας· εἶτα τό πάθος κινούμενον, ἀναφέρει τήν μορφήν τῆς γυναικός διά τῆς μνήμης ἐπί τόν νοῦν.... Πλήν ἐν οὐδενί τῶν εἰρημένων τρόπων ἰσχύουσι πάθος τό οἱονδήποτε κινῆσαι οἱ δαίμονες, παρούσης τῇ ψυχῇ ἀγάπης καί ἐγκρατείας, οὔτε ἐγρηγορότος τοῦ σώματος, οὔτε κατά τούς ὕπνους.
>
> Some say that the demons, by touching our genitals during sleep, stimulate the passion of fornication. Then, once the passion is stimulated, it recalls in the mind the form of a woman through memory.... Yet the demons cannot stimulate any passion at all in any of the said ways if love and self-control are present in the soul, neither when the body is awake nor when asleep.

Maximus' psychic model is understood as an evolution of the Platonic model.[119] Commenting on Dionysius the Areopagite, Maximus writes that fantasy and imagination are not the same as thinking: "Thinking is active and creative, whereas fantasy or imagination is passive and an imprint signifying an object of senses ...".[120] Maximus believes that passion came into existence after man's expulsion from Eden; often referring to the light of knowledge and self-mastery as the only way to achieve virtue, he is extremely aware of the social aspects of sin and its ability to destroy Christian communities.[121] Probably due to the influence of Origen and Evagrius, Maximus was convinced that the devil wages war on us either through things or through "our impassioned conceptual images of these things".[122] His affinity with Clement is noticeable in *Car.* 3.53 (PG 90, 1032D1–7) where he writes that the mind sins in ways analogous to the body:[123]

---

119 Tympas 2014, 102, 118–19. Although Maximus occasionally applied a dualistic model, comprising rational logos and irrational desire/anger, he preferred the Trinitarian model comprising the nous/intellect, logos/reason, and spirit (*aesthesis*, *Amb.* 2 and 61, PG 91, 1088A10–13 and 1196A1–11). See also Thunberg 1995, 165–195.

120 *Sch.D de div. nom.* 5 (PG 4, 201A10–12): ἡ μὲν γὰρ νόησις ἐνέργειά ἐστι καὶ ποίησις, ἡ δὲ φαντασία πάθος καὶ τύπωσις ἀναγγελτικὴ αἰσθητοῦ τινος....

121 Bathrellos 2015, 296.

122 *Car.* 2.72 (PG 90, 1008A8–11).

123 Trans. Berthold 1985, 68 modified; also, see *Car.* 3.74 (PG 90, 1040C7–9) where Maximus describes how the person who sins from habit (ἀπὸ ἕξεως) καὶ πρῶτον γὰρ κατὰ διάνοιαν οὐκ ἐπαύετο ἁμαρτάνων καὶ μετὰ τὸ πρᾶξαι τῆς αὐτῆς ἐστι διαθέσεως; ("first does not cease sinning in thought and after the act maintains the same disposition"; trans. Berthold 1985, 71 modified).

> Ὥσπερ τὸ σῶμα ἔχει κόσμον τὰ πράγματα, οὕτω καὶ ὁ νοῦς ἔχει κόσμον τὰ νοήματα· καὶ ὥσπερ τὸ σῶμα πορνεύεται μετὰ τοῦ σώματος τῆς γυναικός, οὕτω καὶ ὁ νοῦς πορνεύει μετά τοῦ νοήματος τῆς γυναικός, διὰ τῆς φαντασίας τοῦ ἰδίου σώματος. Τὴν γὰρ μορφὴν τοῦ ἰδίου σώματος βλέπει μιγνυμένην μετὰ τῆς μορφῆς τῆς γυναικὸς κατὰ διάνοιαν.
>
> In the same way as things concern the world of the body, so ideas concern the world of the mind; and as the body fornicates with the body of a woman so does the mind fornicate with the image of woman by imagining its own body [doing so]. For it sees the image of its own body having intercourse with the image of the woman in the mind.

Passion is stirred by memory we are told, a view that echoes Evagrius and was also aired by Clement in agreement with his Platonic source.[124] Furthermore, in agreement with Clement, Evagrius and Dionysius Areopagite, Maximus believes that the demons are not evil by nature but have become evil by misuse of their natural powers.[125] Equally, he agrees with Clement and Evagrius that excessive and delicate eating can rouse licentiousness.[126] To overcome concupiscence, Maximus advises putting our earthly members to death (νεκρώσατε οὖν τὰ μέλη ὑμῶν τὰ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς)—an image that recalls Plato's discussion of death as a point of departure in our search for virtue.[127] While Maximus refers to fornication as actual sinning (πορνείαν δὲ εἶπε τὴν κατ᾽ ἐνέργειαν ἁμαρτίαν), he defines passionate thoughts as lust (πάθος δὲ τὸν ἐμπαθῆ λογισμὸν ὠνόμασεν) and even the "acceptance of the concupiscent thought" as evil concupiscence (ἐπιθυμίαν δὲ κακὴν τὴν ψιλὴν τοῦ λογισμοῦ τῆς ἐπιθυμίας παραδοχήν). By revising Evagrius' and Clement's identification of thought with passion, as Neil has pointed out,[128] Maximus argues that one can reach the highest state of dispassion when one's thoughts do not incite the passions. In *Centuries on Charity* 1.84 (PG 90, 980B1–4) he describes how memory brings a mere thought to the mind which arouses passion after lingering there for a while. Soon, if not removed, it sways the mind to consent. In 1.89 (PG 90, 981A5–7) he asserts that "when the soul begins to feel its own good health, then it begins to see in

124 *Str.* 6.2.23.4–5 (GCS 15, 440): ἀρχὴ μὲν ἔρωτος ὅρασις, μειοῖ δὲ τὸ πάθος ἐλπίς, τρέφει δὲ μνήμη … ("the start of sexual attraction is sight, hope reduces passion but memory nourishes it …"); cf. *Phdr.* 249e4–250b1 (LCL 36, 482, 484).

125 *Car.* 3.5 (PG 90, 1020A1–3).

126 *Car.* 3.7 (PG 90, 1020A6–9).

127 *Car.* 1.83 (PG 90, 980A4); cf. Pl. *Resp.* 386b, 609e–611c (LCL 237, 220 and 446–452).

128 Neil 2004, *passim*.

its dreams simple and serene images;"[129] and again in 1.93 (PG 90, 981B9–11) we hear that "[A] sign of total detachment is that the ideas of things always arising in the heart are mere thoughts, both when the body is awake and during sleep."[130]

In my view Maximus, who cites Clement's *Stromata* in one of his *logoi* (κθ′) on the practice of wakefulness, is actively trying to explain Clement's fear of sexual dreams, which can be overcome, according to him. Hence, in his *Chapters on Theology and the Economy* he concludes that[131] "without an object of senses, there is no passion. For without the presence of a woman there is no fornication". Maximus, who refers to the concupiscence of the eye much in the spirit in which Clement urges us to remove our eyes and all senses from our thought in order to achieve pure philosophising, advised that spiritual love and self-mastery can help us separate representations from their accompanying passion;[132] and thus, we may reduce threatening imaginings to simple, harmless thoughts.

3 Conclusion

This chapter has traced the association of demons with lustful images and dreams, starting with Clement of Alexandria, who discusses the issues independently, yet through a distinctly Platonic lens. Although Clement was probably familiar with the Jewish concept of *yetzer hara*, in my view, he relies on Plato's *Republic* for developing a dream theory according to which lustful daydreaming is the utmost indication of moral corruption because, as in the case of Plato's tyrant, it signifies loss of self-control and reason. In Christian demonology, particularly as developed by Origen and closely studied by Eusebius and Evagrius, lustful dreams are presented as demonic attacks; yet the implication remains that, regardless of whether the demon stirs existing memories or induces lustful images in our mind, the attack is external and can be deflected if we master our passions. Following this direction of argument, Maximus the Confessor argues that it is possible to have dispassionate dreams about women. The Greek fathers clearly appreciated Clement's Platonic gloss of our

129 Ὅταν ἡ ψυχὴ ἄρχηται τῆς ἰδίας ὑγείας ἐπαισθάνεσθαι, τότε καὶ τὰς ἐν τοῖς ὕπνοις φαντασίας, ψιλὰς καὶ ἀταράχους ἄρχεται βλέπειν; trans. Berthold 1985, 45 modified.

130 Σημεῖον ἄκρας ἀπαθείας, τὸ ψιλὰ τὰ νοήματα τῶν πραγμάτων ἀεὶ ἀναβαίνειν ἐπὶ τὴν καρδίαν, καὶ ἐγρηγορότος τοῦ σώματος, καὶ κατὰ τοὺς ὕπνους; trans. Berthold 1985, 45 modified.

131 *Th.oec.* 3.3 (PG 90, 1260): Χωρὶς γὰρ αἰσθητοῦ πράγματος, πάθος οὐ συνίσταται. Μὴ γὰρ οὔσης γυναικός, οὐκ ἔστι πορνεία; cf. *Q. Thal.* Ν′ (PG 90, 476, sch. η′).

132 … χωρίζομεν δὲ δι' ἀγάπης πνευματικῆς καὶ ἐγκρατείας; *Car.* 3.43 (PG 90, 1030, no. μγ′).

struggle against lustful dreams; in addition, the very idea that the empire, of which we are all citizens, is God's kingdom on earth adds a further Platonic twist to our responsibility to withstand lustful daydreaming and to channel, instead, our energy to desiring a union of pure love with God. In Clement's words, we should be "wooing the eternal love of wisdom".[133]

Bibliography

Primary Sources

Aëtius (1879) Ed. H. Diels, *Placita philosophorum* in *Doxographi Graeci* (Berlin), 273–444.

Apollonius Rhodius (2008) Ed. and trans. W. H. Race, *Argonautica*, LCL 1 (Cambridge, MA).

Aristotle (1957) Ed. and trans. W. S. Hett, *De Insomniis* in *On the Soul. Parva Naturalia. On Breath*, LCL 288 (Cambridge, MA).

Chrysippus (2005) Ed. and trans. P. De Lacy, *Galen, On the Doctrines of Hippocrates and Plato*, 3rd edn. 3 vols (Berlin).

Cicero (1933) Ed. and trans. H. Rackham, *On the Nature of the Gods. Academics*, LCL 268 (Cambridge, MA).

Clement of Alexandria (1905) Ed. O. Stählin, *Clemens Alexandrinus I. Protrepticus und Paedagogus*, GCS 12 (Leipzig).

Clement of Alexandria (1905) Ed. (1905) Ed. O. Stählin, *Clemens Alexandrinus II. Stromata, libri 1–6*, GCS 15 (Leipzig).

Clement of Alexandria (1909) Ed. O. Stählin, *Clemens Alexandrinus III. Stromata, libri 7–8. Excerpta ex Theodoto. Eclogae Propheticae. Quis Dives Salvetur. Fragmente*, GCS 17 (Leipzig).

Clement of Alexandria (1913) Ed. A. Roberts and J. Donaldson, rev. A. C. Coxe, *Fathers of the Second Century: Hermas, Athenagoras, Theophilus, and Clement of Alexandria* (*entire*). Trans. W. Wilson, ANF 2 (Grand Rapids, MI).

Clement of Alexandria (1919) Ed. and trans. G. W. Butterworth, *The Exhortation to the Greeks. The Rich Man's Salvation. To the Newly Baptized*, LCL 92 (Cambridge, MA).

Diogenes Laertius (1925) Trans. R. D. Hicks, *Life of Zeno* in *Lives of Eminent Philosophers, Vol. II: Books 6–10*, LCL 185 (Cambridge, MA).

Eclogae Propheticae (1942) Ed. T. Gaisford (Oxford).

Eusebius of Caesarea (1902) Ed. I. A. Heikel, *Eusebius Werke I. Vita Constantini, De laudibus Constantini, Constantini imperatoris oratio ad sanctorum coetum*, GCS 7/1 (Leipzig).

133 *Protr*. 11.113.1: σοφίας ἀίδιον μνηστευομένη ἔρωτα (GCS 12, 79). Cited by Alieva 2016, 686.

Eusebius of Caesarea (1903) Ed. Th. Mommsen, *Eusebius Werke II/1. Historia ecclesiastica* (*libri 1–5*), GCS 9/1 (Leipzig).

Eusebius of Caesarea (1908) Ed. Th. Mommsen, *Eusebius Werke II/2. Historia Ecclesiastica* (*libri 6–10*), GCS 9/2 (Leipzig).

Eusebius of Caesarea (1913) Ed. I. A. Heikel, *Eusebius Werke VI. Demonstratio Evangelica*, GCS 23 (Leipzig).

Eusebius of Caesarea (1954) Ed. K. Mras, *Eusebius Werke VIII/1. Preparatio Evangelica* (*books 1–10*), GCS 43/1 (Berlin). *Commentaria in Lucam* (= *Fr. Luc.*) PG 24, 530–604.

Evagrius of Pontus *De octo spiritibus malitiae.* PG 79, 1145–1164.

Evagrius of Pontus (1971) *Praktikos.* Eds A. and C. Guillaumont, *Évagre le Pontique. Traité Pratique ou Le Moine*, SC 170 (Introduction), 171 (text), (Paris). Trans. R. E. Sinkewicz (2003) *Evagrius of Pontus: The Greek Ascetic Corpus* (Oxford), 95–114. Trans. J. E. Bamberger (1970), *The Praktikos and Chapters on Prayer*, Cistercian Studies Series 4 (Collegeville, MN).

Evagrius of Pontus 1998) *On the Thoughts.* Ed. and trans. P. Géhin, C. Guillaumont, A. Guillaumont, *Évagre le Pontique, Sur les pensées*, SC 438 (Paris).

John Stobaeus (1894) Ed. C. Wachsmuth and O. Hense, *Florilegium* (*Anthologium*) (Berlin).

Maximus the Confessor *Ambiguorum Liber*, PG 91, 1031–1418.

Maximus the Confessor *Capita de Caritate*, PG 90, 959–1082. Trans. G. C. Berthold (1985) *The Four Hundred Chapters on Love* in Maximus the Confessor, *Selected Writings*, Classics of Western Spirituality (Mahwah, NJ), 33–98.

Maximus the Confessor *Capita Theologiae et Oeconomiae*, PG 90, 1083–1461.

Maximus the Confessor *Quaestiones ad Thalassium*, PG 90, 244–785.

Maximus the Confessor *Scholia* on Dionysius Areopagite, *De Divinis Nominibus*, PG 4, 586–996.

Origen of Alexandria (1885) Trans. F. Crombie, *Against Celsus*, ANF 4 (Buffalo, NY).

Origen of Alexandria (1899) Ed. P. Koetschau, *Origenes Werke I. Contra Celsum I–IV* and *Origenes Werke II. Contra Celsum V–VIII, De Oratione*, GCS 2 and 3 (Leipzig).

Origen of Alexandria (1913) Ed. P. Koetschau, *Origines. Werke V. De Principiis*, GCS 22 (Leipzig).

Origen of Alexandria (1920) Ed. W. A. Baehrens, *Homilies on Genesis* in *Origines Werke VI. Homilien zum Hexateuch*, GCS 29 (Leipzig).

Origen of Alexandria (1921) Ed. W. A. Baehrens, *Homilies on the Book of Jesus Nave* (*Joshua*) and *Homilies on Numbers* in *Origines Werke VII. Homilien zum Hexateuch*, GCS 30 (Leipzig).

Origen of Alexandria (1931) Ed. M. Bauer, *Homilies on the Gospel of Luke* in *Origenes Werke IX. Homiliae in Lucam*, GCS 35 (Leipzig).

Origen of Alexandria *Philosophumena* (*sive Omnium haereseon refutatio*), PG 16.3, 3009–3454.

Origen of Alexandria *Selecta in Psalmos* PG 12, 1053–1684.

Plato (1914) Ed. and trans. H. N. Fowler, *Euthyphro. Apology. Crito. Phaedo. Phaedrus*, LCL 36 (Cambridge, MA).

Plato (1921) Ed. and trans. H. N. Fowler, *Theaetetus. Sophist*, LCL 123 (Cambridge, MA).

Plato (1925) Ed. and trans. H. N. Fowler, *Statesman. Philebus. Ion*, LCL 164 (Cambridge, MA).

Plato (1925) Ed. and trans. W. R. M. Lamb, *Lysis. Symposium. Gorgias*, LCL 166 (Cambridge, MA).

Plato (1926) Ed. and trans. H. N. Fowler, *Cratylus. Parmenides. Greater Hippias. Lesser Hippias*, LCL 167 (Cambridge, MA).

Plato (1926) Ed. and trans. R. G. Bury, *Laws. Books 1–6*, LCL 187 (Cambridge, MA).

Plato (1929) Ed. and trans. R. G. Bury, *Timaeus. Critias. Cleitophon. Menexenus. Epistles*, LCL 234 (Cambridge, MA).

Plato (2013) Eds and trans. C. Emlyn-Jones and W. Preddy, *Republic*. *Books 1–5*, LCL 237; *Books 6–10*, LCL 276 (Cambridge, MA).

Plutarch (1928) Ed. and trans. F. C. Babbitt, *Advice about Keeping Well* in *Moralia, Vol. II*, LCL 222 (Cambridge, MA).

Plutarch (1939) Ed. and trans. W. C. Helmbold, *Concerning Talkativeness* and *On Being a Busybody* in *Moralia, Vol. VI*, LCL 337 (Cambridge, MA).

Plutarch (1957) Ed. and trans. H. Cherniss and W. C. Helmbold, *Concerning the Face Which Appears in the Orb of the Moon* in *Moralia, Vol. XII*, LCL 406 (Cambridge, MA).

Quintilian (2002) Ed. and trans. D. A. Russell, *The Orator's Education, Vol. III: Books 6–8*, LCL 126 (Cambridge, MA).

Sextus Empiricus (1914) Ed. H. Mutschmann, *Sexti Empirici Opera,* ΠΥΡΡΩΝΕΙΩΝ ΥΠΟΤΥΠΩΣΕΩΝ, vol. 2 (Leipzig).

Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta (1967) Ed. H. F. von Arnim, *Chrysippi Fragmenta Moralia. Fragmenta Successorum Chrysippi*, vol. 3 (Leipzig).

Xenophon (2013) Ed. and trans. E. C. Marchant, O. J. Todd, *Memorabilia. Oeconomicus. Symposium. Apology*, LCL 168 (Cambridge, MA).

Secondary Sources

Alieva, O. (2016) 'Origen's Protreptics to Philosophy: Testimony of Gregory Thaumaturgus in the Oratio Panegyrica, VI', in A. C. Jacobsen (ed.) *Origeniana Undecima: Origen and Origenism in the History of Western Thought* (Leuven), 681–689.

Anagnostou-Laoutides, E. (2014) 'Sexual Ethics and Unnatural Vice: From Zeno and Musonius Rufus to Augustine and Aquinas', in W. Mayer and I. Elmer (eds) *Men and Women in the Early Christian Centuries* (Strathfield), 271–292.

Annas, A. (1983) *Introduction to Plato's Republic* (Oxford).

Ashwin-Siejkowski, P. (2008) *Clement of Alexandria. A Project of Christian Perfection* (London and New York).

Ashwin-Siejkowski, P. (2010) *Clement of Alexandria on Trial: The Evidence of 'Heresy' from Photius' Bibliotheca* (Leiden).

Baghos, M. (2015) 'The Conflicting Portrayals of Origen in the Byzantine Tradition', *Phronema* 30(2), 69–104.

Bathrellos, D. (2004) *The Byzantine Christ. Person, Nature and Will in the Christology of St Maximus the Confessor* (Oxford).

Bathrellos, D. (2015) 'Passions, Ascesis, and the Virtues', in P. Allen and B. Neil (eds) *The Oxford Handbook of Maximus the Confessor* (Oxford), 287–306.

Bos, A. P. (1989) 'A "Dreaming Kronos" in a Lost Work by Aristotle', *L'antiquité classique* 58, 88–111.

Brakke, D. (2006) *Demons and the Making of the Monk* (Cambridge, MA).

Chadwick, H. (1953) *Origen. Contra Celsum* (Cambridge).

Colish, M. (1985) *The Stoic Tradition from Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages: Stoicism in Classical Latin Literature* (Leiden).

Cooper, J. M. (2005) 'The Emotional Life of the Wise', *The Southern Journal of Philosophy* 43, 176–218.

De Harven, V. (2017) 'Rational Impressions and the Stoic Philosophy of Mind,' in J. Sisko (ed.) *History of Philosophy of Mind: Pre-Socratics to Augustine*, vol. 1 (London and New York).

Dillon, J. (1996) *The Middle Platonists, 80 BC to AD 220*, rev. edn (Ithaca).

Ferguson, J. (1974) *Clement of Alexandria* (New York).

Gaca, K. L. (2003) *The Making of Fornication. Eros, Ethics, and Political Reform in Greek Philosophy and Early Christianity* (Berkeley).

Gauthier, R.-A. (1954) 'Saint Maxime le Confesseur et la psychologie de l'acte humain', *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale* 21, 51–100.

Gibbons, K. (2015) 'Moses, Statesman and Philosopher: The Ideal of Assimilating to God and the Methodology of Clement of Alexandria's Stromateis 1', *Vigiliae Christianae* 69(2), 157–185.

Gibbons, K. (2016) *The Moral Psychology of Clement of Alexandria: Mosaic Philosophy* (Abingdon and New York).

Golden, L. (1974) 'General Introduction', in A. Preminger, O. B. Hardison and K. Kerrane (eds) *Classical and Medieval Literary Criticism: Translations and Interpretations* (New York), 3–13.

Guillaumont, A. (2004) *Un philosophe au désert: Évagre le Pontique*, Textes et traditions 8 (Paris).

Hirschman, M. (2013) Review of Rosen-Zvi, I. *Demonic Desires, Association for Jewish Studies Review* 37(1), 144–146.

Hofer, A. (2015) 'Clement of Alexandria's Logos Protreptikos: The Protreptics of Love', *Pro Ecclesia* 24(4), 498–516.

Holowchak, M. (2009) 'Sleeping with Mother, Men, Gods, and Beasts: Virtuous Rule and Vicious Dreams in Republic IX', *Plato: the Internet Journal of the International Plato Society*. gramata.univ-paris1.fr/Plato/rubrique7.html.

Itter, A. C. (2009) *Esoteric Teaching in the* Stromateis *of Clement of Alexandria* (Leiden).

Johannessen, H. (2016) *The Demonic in the Political Thought of Eusebius of Caesarea*. (Oxford).

Karavites, P. (1999) *Evil, Freedom, and the Road to Perfection in Clement of Alexandria* (Leiden).

Kofsky, A. (2002) *Eusebius of Caesarea Against Paganism* (Leiden).

Kovacs, J. L. (2016) 'Reading the 'Divinely Inspired' Paul: Clement of Alexandria in Conversation with 'Heterodox' Christians, Simple Believers, and Greek Philosophers', in V. Černušková, J. L. Kovacs, J. Plátová (eds) *Clement's Biblical Exegesis: Proceedings of the Second Colloquium on Clement of Alexandria* (*Olomouc, May 29–31, 2014*) (Leiden), 325–344.

Lamascus, L. D. (2016) *The Poverty of Eros in Plato's Symposium* (London and New York).

Le Goff, J. (1992) *The Medieval Imagination* (Chicago and London).

Leahy, D. G. (1994) *Novitas Mundi: Perception of the History of Being* (New York).

Long, A. A. (1982) 'Soul and Body in Stoicism', *Phronesis* 27(1), 34–57.

MacDermot, V. (1971) *The Cult of the Seer in the Ancient Middle East: A Contribution to Current Research on Hallucinations Drawn from Coptic and Other Texts* (Berkeley and Los Angeles).

Malaty, T. Y. (1994) *Origen: the Deans of the School of Alexandria* (Jersey City, NJ).

McGuckin, J. A. (2004) 'The Life of Origen (ca. 186–255)', in id. (ed.) *The Westminster Handbook to Origen* (Louisville and London), 1–23.

Metzger, B. M. (1987) *The Canon of the New Testament: Its Origin, Development, and Significance* (Clarendon).

Moss, J. (2012) 'Pictures and Passions in the Timaeus and Philebus', in R. Barney, T. Brennan and C. Britain (eds) *Plato and the Divided Self* (Cambridge), 259–280.

Neil, B. (2004) '"The Blessed Passion of Holy Love": Maximus the Confessor's Spiritual Psychology', *Australian eJournal of Theology* 2.8, 1–8.

Nicholson, O. (2000) 'Constantine's Vision of the Cross', *Vigiliae Christianae* 54(3), 309–323.

Olson, C. (2007) *Celibacy and Religious Traditions* (Oxford).

Paša, Ž. (2010) *The Influence of Evagrius Ponticus on the Thought of Maximus the Confessor* (Rome).

Patrick, J. (1914) *Clement of Alexandria* (Edinburgh).

Rankin, H. D. 1964 'Dream/Vision as Philosophical Modifier in Plato's Republic', *Eranos* 62, 75–83.

Recinová, M. (2012) 'Clement's Angelological Doctrines: Between Jewish Models and Philosophic-Religious Streams of Late Antiquity', in M. Havrda, V. Hušek, and J. Plátová (eds) *The Seventh Book of the Stromateis: Proceedings of the Colloquium on Clement of Alexandria* (*Olomouc, October 21–23, 2010*) (Leiden), 93–112.

Rosen-Zvi, I. (2011) *Demonic Desires 'Yetzer Hara' and the Problem of Evil in Late Antiquity* (Philadelphia).

Sinkewicz, R. E. (2003) *Evagrius Ponticus, The Greek Ascetic Corpus* (Oxford).

Sörbom, G. (1994) 'Aristotle on Music as Representation', *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 52(1), 37–46.

Stewart, C. (2002) 'Erotic Dreams and Nightmares from Antiquity to the Present', *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 8.2, 279–309.

Stewart, C. (2005) 'Evagrius Ponticus and the Eight Generic Logismoi', in R. Newhauser (ed.) *In the Garden of Evil: the Vices and Cultures in the Middle Ages* (Toronto), 1–33.

Stewart, C. (2011) 'Evagrius Ponticus and the Eastern Monastic Tradition on the Intellect and the Passions', *Modern Theology* 27, 263–275.

Szívós, M. (2005) 'Temporality, Reification and Subjectivity: Carneades and the Foundations of the World of Subjectivity', in P. Barrotta and M. Dascal (eds) *Controversies and Subjectivity* (Amsterdam and Philadelphia), 201–234.

Thunberg, L. (1995) *Microcosm and Mediator. The Theological Anthropology of Maximus the Confessor*, 2nd edn (Chicago, IL).

Tilby, A. (2009) *The Seven Deadly Sins: Their Origins in the Spiritual Teaching of Evagrius the Hermit* (London).

Tympas, G. C. (2014) *Carl Jung and Maximus the Confessor on Psychic Development: The dynamics between the 'psychological' and the 'spiritual'* (London and New York).

Van Winden, J. C. M. (1978) 'Quotations from Philo in Clement of Alexandria's Protrepticus', *Vigiliae Christianae* 32, 208–213.

Vigorelli, I. (2016) 'Schesis and Trinitarian Thought in Clement of Alexandria: From Philosophy to Scriptural Interpretation', in V. Černušková, J. L. Kovacs, J. Plátová (eds) *Clement's Biblical Exegesis: Proceedings of the Second Colloquium on Clement of Alexandria* (*Olomouc, 29–31 May 2014*) (Leiden), 147–161.

Von Staden, H. (1989) *Herophilus: The Art of Medicine in Early Alexandria* (Cambridge).

Wagner, W. H. (2013) 'Clement of Alexandria', in E. Ferguson (ed.) *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*, 2nd edn (London and New York), 262–264.

Watson, G. (1988) 'Discovering the imagination, Platonists and Stoics on phantasia', in J. M. Dillon and A. A. Long (eds) *The Question of 'Eclecticism', Studies in Later Greek Philosophy* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London), 208–233.

CHAPTER 4

The Inner Source of Dreams: Synesius of Cyrene's Reception in the Palaiologan Era

Francesco Monticini

In 405 CE the philosopher-bishop Synesius[1] sent a letter to his former teacher Hypatia along with two then unpublished works: the first one was *On Dio* and the other was a brief treatise about dreams. More than two-thirds of the letter was dedicated to introducing the first work. At the end of the letter there were a few very evocative words about the treatise *On Dreams*:

> Θάτερον δὲ θεὸς καὶ ἐπέταξε καὶ ἀνέκρινεν, ὃ τῇ φανταστικῇ φύσει χαριστήριον ἀνατέθειται. Ἔσκεπται δὲ ἐν αὐτῷ περὶ τῆς εἰδωλικῆς ἁπάσης ψυχῆς, καὶ ἕτερ᾽ἄττα προκεχείρισται δόγματα τῶν οὔπω φιλοσοφηθέντων Ἕλλησι. […] ἀλλ᾽ ἐξείργασται μὲν ἐπὶ μιᾶς ἅπαν νυκτός, μᾶλλον δὲ λειψάνου νυκτός, ἣ καὶ τὴν ὄψιν ἤνεγκε τὴν περὶ τοῦ δεῖν αὐτὸ συγγεγράφθαι. Ἔστι δὲ οὗ τῶν λόγων δίς που καὶ τρίς, ὥσπερ τις ἕτερος ὤν, ἐμαυτοῦ γέγονα μετὰ τῶν παρόντων ἀκροατής.[2]
>
> The other work [*On Dreams*] God ordained and he gave his sanction to it, and it has been set up as a thank-offering to the imaginative faculties. It contains an inquiry into the whole imaginative soul, and into some other points which have not yet been handled by any Greek philosopher. […] This work was completed, the whole of it, in a single night, or rather, at the end of a night, one which also brought the vision enjoining me to write it. There are two or three passages in the book in which it seemed to me that I was some other person, and that I was one listening to myself amongst others who were present.[3]

1 For an introduction to Synesius and his treatise *On Dreams*, see Lacombrade 1951; Marrou 1952; Bregman 1982; Aujoulat 1983 and 1984; Barnes 1986; Roques 1987; Garzya 1989; Susanetti 1992; Cameron and Long 1993; Di Pasquale Barbanti 1994; Schmitt 2001; Lamoureux and Aujoulat 2004, 187–267; Bregman 2010; Russell and Nesselrath 2014; Neil 2015; Toulouse 2016.

2 Synesius, *Ep.* 154 (Garzya 1989, 374, 376).

3 Trans. Fitzgerald 1930, 254.

© KONINKLIJKE BRILL NV, LEIDEN, 2018 | DOI:10.1163/9789004375710_006

It appears evident that Synesius is here revealing to his reader Hypatia that he put forward in this treatise doctrines entirely new to Greek philosophy. One may find confirmation of this in the preface of the work *On Dreams*:

> Ἀρχαῖον οἶμαι καὶ λίαν Πλατωνικὸν ὑπὸ προσχήματι φαυλοτέρας ὑποθέσεως κρύπτειν τὰ ἐν φιλοσοφίᾳ σπουδαῖα, τοῦ μήτε τὰ μόλις εὑρεθέντα πάλιν ἐξ ἀνθρώπων ἀπόλλυσθαι μήτε μολύνεσθαι δήμοις βεβήλοις ἐκκείμενα. Τοῦτο τοίνυν ἐζηλώθη μὲν ὅτι μάλιστα τῷ παρόντι συγγράμματι.[4]
>
> It is, I believe, an ancient practice, and a truly Platonic one, to conceal serious philosophical matters under cover of some more trivial theme, so that hard-won discoveries may not again be lost to humanity, but yet not be defiled by exposure to the profane vulgar. This has been very much my aim in the present work.[5]

What doctrines did Synesius hide from the approach of the profane in his *On Dreams*? This article deals with Synesius' conception of dreams, imagination and the soul. In particular, it concerns the reception of this text in fourteenth-century Byzantium. At that time, Nicephorus Gregoras wrote a commentary on Synesius' *On Dreams*.[6] However, he was not the only one: an anonymous contemporary author put scholia in the margins of a manuscript of the same text.[7] Although a critical edition of the former exegetical work already exists,[8] the latter is yet unedited.

Over the last decades, many scholars have treated the issue of Synesius' most profound philosophical message in *On Dreams*.[9] Synesius probably aimed to provide Neoplatonism with some doctrines that admitted the persistence of the individual person in the afterlife. What is most interesting for us is that, in order to reach his goal, he needed to find a connection between the realm of Becoming (that is, the daily experience of everyone) and the divine realm. He achieved his purpose by analysing the human faculty of dreaming. In fact, he completely revised the most common conception of dreaming in Antiquity.[10]

---

4 Synesius, *Insomn.* praef. (Lamoureux and Aujoulat 2004, 268).

5 Trans. Russell and Nesselrath 2014, 13.

6 The most recent publication on this exegetical work is Bydén 2014.

7 See *infra* for more details.

8 Nicephorus Gregoras, *Explicatio* (Pietrosanti 1999).

9 On this matter, see Tanaseanu-Döbler 2014, and also Toulouse 2016, 668–676, Lamoureux and Aujoulat 2004, 222–249, Lacombrade 1951, and Bregman 1982, 147–152.

10 There existed other theories on dreams, e.g. that of Aristotle, in whose opinion dreams were a physiological phenomenon completely devoid of any prophetic power. See Aristotle, *Insomn.* and *Div.* (Repici 2003 and Pigeaud 1995).

Synesius found the sources of his thought in Platonic and Neoplatonic doctrines, as we will see.

From Homer onwards, dreams were generally perceived, in Greek culture, as a phenomenon that entered the human being from outside, inspired by the divine, and not as a product of human interiority. In this regard, it is important to remark that modern people usually say, "I had a dream", while the ancient Greeks said, "I *saw* a dream".[11] Moreover, in Greece, as in many other cultures,[12] sleep was conceived as strongly linked to death: for this reason, oneiric images were very often perceived as visions of the afterlife.[13]

Humankind in ancient, medieval and contemporary cultures and traditions shared a very strong belief in the prophetic power of dreams, and a belief that human beings cannot foresee the future by themselves but receive oneiric visions from a superior entity. This "traditional" concept of dreams was asserted by Plato, who claimed in many passages of his dialogues that dreams came from the gods.[14] However, in *Timaeus*,[15] he also penned a physiological explanation of dreaming. According to him, the human being can apprehend divine truths, such as prophetic dreams, through the reflection of the logical soul (located in the head) in the appetitive soul (found in the liver). In this case, and this is very important for later Neoplatonic thinkers, including Synesius, the divine does not communicate with humans "directly" (as in myths, for instance): divine truths must pass through the different parts of the soul to become recognisable to human beings. This concept, as we will see, is the premise of the theory of an internal source of dreams. Indeed, the Neoplatonic doctrine of emanationism—according to which all phenomenal things are an emanation from the One—conceived the divine realm as the intellectual realm: knowing meant remembering, not learning something completely new.

Because of the belief in the prophetic power of dreams, the conception of them did not change much from Antiquity to the Middle Ages. Christianity played a very important role in this regard, but even its attitude toward oneiromancy was ambiguous. On one hand, the Church Fathers could not recognise the validity of dreams. As images, dreams had to pass through the senses: this meant that they were products of the material realm. Athanasius of Alexandria tells us that the monk Anthony practised many spiritual exercises in order to

11 ὄναρ ἰδεῖν: Guastella 1995.

12 E.g. the Māori believe that the soul of the sleeping person goes to the *reinga* (the realm of the afterlife), where it meets the souls of the dead (Guidorizzi 2013, 20–22).

13 As, for example, in Plut. *Fr.* 178 (Sandbach 1969, 320) and Xen. *Cyr.* 8, 7, 21 (Miller 1979, 434).

14 Cf. Plato, *Apol.* 33c; *Crit.*, 44b; *Phaed.* 60d–61c (Fowler 1982, 118–120, 154, 210–212).

15 Plato, *Tim.* 71b–e (Bury 1981, 184–186).

avoid dreaming during his ascetic life in the desert.[16] Furthermore, the Church was sceptical about legitimating "pagan" practices like oneiromancy. On the other hand, Christian thinkers could not avoid taking into account the many examples of prophetic dreams which were found in the Bible. Most Church Fathers, such as Evagrius Ponticus and John Climacus, considered dreams as visions coming from a supernatural entity, generally from a demonic being and very seldom from God or from the saints. This allowed them to preserve and legitimise the ancient conception of dreams found in the Bible, but at the same time, in most cases, they discredited oneiromancy.[17]

Consequently, the conception of dreams that one discerns in dreambooks dating back to Antiquity, like that of Artemidorus,[18] is approximately the same as resides in the later Byzantine manuals. Unfortunately, there are few Byzantine works on oneiromancy remaining. In addition, their dates are generally very uncertain and their traditional attributions are almost always false.[19] In some cases, these manuals consist of mere alphabetical lists of dreams, such as those attributed to Daniel and patriarch Nicephorus, while others are a little more complex and composed of chapters that discuss various types of dreams, like the manuals attributed to Achmet and to the emperor Manuel II Palaiologos.[20]

The same conception of dreams is also discernible in some Byzantine saints' *Lives*, in which oneiric visions are linked to icons not made by human hand (*acheiropoieta*). In the *Life of St. Theodora of Thessaloniki*, for example, one may read the episode of a painter who was unable to make a portrait of the saint, because he had never seen her while she was alive. Yet, as soon as he fell asleep, the saint appeared to him in a dream. When he woke up, he was able to complete his work.[21]

I have asserted above that Synesius revised the traditional conception of dreams, but his treatise is ambiguous and sometimes difficult to comprehend. Nevertheless, as Synesius recounts to Hypatia in the passage of *Letter* 154 cited above, most of his dissertation is devoted to the concept he calls the

16 Athanasius of Alexandria, *Life of Anthony* 6 (Bartelink 1994, 146, 148). Moreover, Athanasius was not hostile toward dreams (Neil 2015, 31–33). See Neil, Costache and Wagner forthcoming on Athanasius' theory of dreaming and divine *ekstasis* (chs 3 and 4) and Synesius' virtue ethics of dreaming (ch. 5).

17 For a first introduction to this matter, see Monticini 2017, 78–80 (with bibliography).

18 On Artemidorus' *Oneirocritica*, I am quoting the recent essays of Du Bouchet and Chandezon 2012, and the text in Artemidorus, *Oneir.* (Harris-McCoy 2012).

19 See Guidorizzi 1985; Ps-Niceph. (Guidorizzi 1980, 7–26); Oberhelman 1980, 1986, 2008, 2014; Dagron 1985; Timotin 2010 and 2016.

20 Guidorizzi 1980, 15; Timotin 2015, 315–318.

21 Timotin 2010, 235–246.

"imaginative spirit".[22] It consists of the intermediate part between the soul and the body, the innermost part of human self-consciousness according to both Platonic and Aristotelian philosophy. There is nothing that a mortal can perceive which does not pass through the imaginative spirit. Thus, assuming that dreams are cognisable (primarily as images), Synesius argues that they must be detected in the same way as sense perceptions: they must, briefly, pass through the centre of human consciousness, that is, the imaginative spirit. However, if this process is easy to understand when present perceptions are involved (reaching our consciousness from the external world, that is, the physical sphere, penetrating our sensory organs), one cannot comprehend how certain images, pertaining to the future, are capable of being perceived by the human being. In order to be detected, oneiric images must reach the imaginative spirit. However, they cannot derive from the senses as normal perceptions do because the notion of the future, which is usually typical of the divinity, cannot come from the material realm. The latter realm is considered deceitful *par excellence*, according to the author's Neoplatonic accounts.

Synesius stated that the imaginative spirit is a sort of intermediary between the immaterial and the material realms, between the soul and the body. Obviously, if the prophetic images that appear in dreams cannot reach it coming from the outside, they must have an internal origin, that is, the soul. After all, this is the most convenient solution for a Neoplatonic thinker, who believes the soul consists in the divine part of the human being. Evidently, the precognition of the future must somehow come from the supernatural realm. However, one must demonstrate it logically.

To do so, Synesius had recourse to the fifth book of Euclid's *Elements*, where the mathematician discussed proportions and their properties. Synesius asserts:

> Νοῦς μὲν γὰρ ἔχει τὰ εἴδη τῶν ὄντων, ἀρχαία φιλοσοφία φησί. προσθείημεν δ' ἂν ἡμεῖς, ὅτι καὶ τῶν γινομένων ψυχή, ἐπειδὴ λόγος ἐστὶ νῷ πρὸς ψυχήν, ὅστις τῷ ὄντι πρὸς τὸ γινόμενον. ἐναλλὰξ οὖν πρώτῳ πρὸς τρίτον, καὶ δευτέρῳ πρὸς τέταρτον· καὶ ἀνάπαλιν λαβόντες, οὐδὲν ἧττον ἂν ἀληθεύοιμεν ὅροις ἐπιστήμης ἑπόμενοι.[23]

22 πνεῦμα φανταστικόν: *Ep.* 154 (cf. n. 2 above). There, Synesius spoke about "imaginative faculties" and the "imaginative soul". Concerning the imaginative spirit, see Lamoureux and Aujoulat 2004, 208–216, and the more recent articles of Tanaseanu-Döbler 2014 and Toulouse 2016, 668–671. Concerning the history of the evolution of the terms πνεῦμα and φαντασία in Neoplatonism, see Di Pasquale Barbanti 1998, 21–71 (with bibliography); Aujoulat 1988; Zambon 2005.

23 Synesius, *Insomn.* 4 (Lamoureux and Aujoulat 2004, 274).

> Mind contains the forms of things that are, says ancient philosophy;[24] we may add that Soul contains those of things that come to be, since the relation of Mind to Soul is the same as that of Being to Becoming. So, *permutando*, taking the first term <of the proportion> with the third and the second with the fourth, and then reversing the pairs, we shall reach an equally true conclusion, following the rules of science.[25]

By this demonstration, Synesius can affirm that there exists a relationship between the soul and the realm of Becoming. However, before analysing this passage along with its philosophical implications in detail, it is important to consider the Byzantine commentaries.

As already stated, the most well known exegetical work on Synesius' *On Dreams* was written by Nicephorus Gregoras probably in the second half of the 1320s and completed around 1335 (at the latest),[26] which can be confirmed from his epistolary correspondence. However, there is also another, anonymous commentary on Synesius' work, of which the first critical edition is currently in preparation.

The first philologist who wrote about this second commentary was Nicola Terzaghi, in an article published in 1910.[27] Referring to a Florentine codex, he wrote: "*Il principio del* Perì Enypnìon, *dal f. 387r al f. 392r, e precisamente fino alle parole καθηραμένην ἀναδῦναι* (*p. 328. 12*), *è fornito di un ricchissimo commentario, il quale non ha nulla di comune con quello di Niceforo Gregora.*"[28] There is nothing in codex L that reveals the identity of the author of these scholia. The most evident dissimilarity between the anonymous and Gregoras' commentary is that the former stops a third of the way through Synesius' treatise, while the latter covers it entirely.[29]

More recently, Jacques Lamoureux and Noël Aujoulat supplemented Terzaghi in the introduction to their edition of Synesius. They indicated the partial recurrence (that is, limited to the glosses or interlinear notes) of the same commentary conveyed by L in another codex, P.[30] On the basis of palaeography,[31] one may state that both manuscripts date back to the first half

24 Cf. Plato, *Parm.*, 132b (cited by Lamoureux and Aujoulat 2004, 274, n. 34).

25 Russell and Nesselrath 2014, 19.

26 Pietrosanti 1999, XXXIX.

27 Terzaghi 1910.

28 Firenze, *Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana*, Plut. 60.6 (henceforth L).

29 It stops approximately at the halfway point of the seventh chapter of Synesius' work.

30 Paris, *Bibliothèque Nationale de France*, gr. 2988 (henceforth P). Lamoureux and Aujoulat 2004, LXVI–LXVII (ff. 58r–64v).

31 See *infra*.

of the 14th century, even if L is slightly older than P. However, as remarked also by Lamoureux and Aujoulat, L cannot be the source of P. In fact, P has a long lacuna[32] in Synesius' text that it surely inherited from its model and that cannot be found in (or explained by) L. Moreover, the preface to Synesius' treatise is in the right place—which is before the main text—in P and at the bottom of the page in L.[33]

On the basis of paleographical and philological evidence,[34] I can affirm that the commentary found in L is the autograph. Concerning the date of that manuscript, Nigel Wilson stated that it probably dates back to the 1320s.[35] Therefore, the anonymous commentary is approximately contemporary with that of Gregoras. The result is that two different scholars commented on the same work of Synesius, around the same time. The most striking fact is that there does not exist any other commentary on Synesius' *On Dreams* before or after this period. Thus, why did this work become so interesting for some Byzantine scholars in the Palaiologan age? What was the main reason which led Gregoras and the anonymous commentator to study so thoroughly a treatise that dated back to more than 900 years earlier? And, finally, what was the relationship between the two scholiasts?

Concerning the last question, it is impossible to answer with certainty solely on the basis of the textual data. The fact that the anonymous commentary stops after the first seven chapters of *On Dreams* makes us suppose that it might have been written slightly before Gregoras' commentary. It is hard to believe that someone started writing a commentary when another complete one already existed. But that is nothing more than a hypothesis.

By reading both exegetical works, one realises that neither of the authors seems to have read the other. Actually, neither has quoted the other or avoided commenting on a passage that had already been explained by the other. The approach to Synesius' text seems to be quite different too. This becomes evident by reading the commentaries in a synoptic way. In general, we can state that the anonymous commentator seems to be more interested in grammar and rhetoric than Gregoras. He has dedicated most scholia to elucidating the exact meaning of some words or to explaining some grammatical connections. On the contrary, Nicephorus Gregoras seems to understand better—and to be more interested in—the philosophical contents of Synesius' text.

32 It covers approximately all the chapters between the 8th and the 13th. The copyist left a white gap to indicate the lacuna (f. 66r).

33 L, 387r; P, 58r.

34 For instance, a typical example of a so-called *saut du même au même* (anablepsis) is found in both L (393v) and P (60r).

35 Wilson 1962, 387, no. 26.

Only a complete synoptic reading of both commentaries can eventually allow us to make a perfect comparison between them and to evaluate their actual contribution to our comprehension of some Synesius' ambiguous sentences. Evidently in this article I cannot deal with this very complex question, but I can give an example, by reading the scholia of both commentators on the same Synesian passage, that is, the philosophical demonstration. It will also help in responding, albeit partially, to the other questions asked above. The answer(s) could reside in Synesius' conception of dreams and the soul.

The following are Nicephorus Gregoras' words:

> Βουλόμενος ἐναργέστερον δεῖξαι τὴν τῶν προτεθέντων ἀναλογίαν, ἢ ὡς ὂν λόγον ἔχει νοῦς καὶ ψυχὴ πρὸς τὰ ὄντα καὶ τὰ γινόμενα, ὅροις ἐχρήσατο καὶ λόγοις τισὶν ἐκ τοῦ πέμπτου τῶν εὐκλείδου στοιχείων. φησὶ γὰρ εὐκλείδης ἐν τοῖς ὅροις τοῦ πέμπτου στοιχείου, ὅτι ἐναλλὰξ λόγος ἐστὶ λῆψις τοῦ ἡγουμένου πρὸς τὸ ἡγούμενον, καὶ τοῦ ἑπομένου πρὸς τὸ ἑπόμενον. πρὸς δὲ ὑπόδειγμα κείσθωσαν ἀριθμοὶ οὗτοι· ις', η', δ', β'. ὃν δὴ λόγον ἔχει ὁ ις' πρὸς τὸν η', τὸν αὐτὸν ἔχει ὁ δ' πρὸς τὸν β'· καί ἐστιν ἡγούμενος ὁ ις' τοῦ η', ὁ δὲ δ' τοῦ β'. ἐναλλὰξ οὖν γίνεται λόγος, ὅταν λάβῃς τὸν ἡγούμενον τὸν ις', καὶ συγκρίνῃς πρὸς τὸν ἡγούμενον τὸν δ', καὶ τὸν ἑπόμενον τὸν η' πρὸς τὸν ἑπόμενον τὸν β'. καὶ δείκνυται πάλιν ὁμοίως ὅτι ὃν λόγον ἔχει ὁ ις' πρὸς τὸν δ', τὸν αὐτὸν ἔχει καὶ ὁ η' πρὸς τὸν β'. δείκνυσιν οὖν ἐντεῦθεν ὅτι ὃν λόγον ἔχει νοῦς πρὸς ψυχήν, τὸν αὐτὸν ἔχει τὰ ὄντα πρὸς τὰ γινόμενα· καὶ ἐναλλὰξ ὃν λόγον ἔχει νοῦς πρὸς ὄντα, τὸν αὐτὸν ἔχει ψυχὴ πρὸς γινόμενα.[36]

> In order to make clear the analogy of previously cited concepts, that is, the relation of Mind to Soul compared to that of Being to Becoming, [Synesius] adopted some rules and ratios from the fifth book by Euclid. In fact, in the rules of the fifth book, Euclid states that an alternate ratio consists in combining the antecedent term with the other antecedent term and the consequent term with the other consequent term. For example, let us consider these numbers: 16, 8, 4, 2. The ratio between 16 and 8 is the same as that between 4 and 2; 16 is the antecedent term of 8 and 4 is the antecedent term of 2. An alternate ratio is achieved if one takes 16 (antecedent term) and combines it with 4 (the other antecedent term) and one takes 8 (consequent term) and combines it with 2 (the other consequent term). One obtains again that the ratio between 16 and 4 is the same as that between 8 and 2. Thus, [Synesius] demonstrates here that the relation of Mind to Soul is the same as that of Being to Becoming:

36 Nicephorus Gregoras, *Explicatio* 134 A ἐναλλάξ (Pietrosanti 1999, 22).

> *permutando*, that the relation of Mind to Being is the same as that of Soul to Becoming.[37]

Synesius began his demonstration stating that the ratio between Mind (νοῦς) and Soul (ψυχή) is the same as that between Being (ὄν) and Becoming (γινόμενον). According to Euclid, one of the properties of the proportions permits inverting the middle terms without changing the final result. For example, both of the proportions 16: 8 = 4: 2 and 16: 4 = 8: 2 are true. Thus, Synesius affirms that the ratio between Mind and Being and that between Soul and Becoming are equal. On this affirmation, the anonymous commentator wrote:

> Ἔχουσα ἡ ψυχὴ τὰ εἴδη τῶν γινομένων διαδίδωσι ταῦτα τῇ φαντασίᾳ. δι᾽ ἧς τῆς φαντασίας εἰς ἀνάμνησιν καὶ αἴσθησιν τῶν ἀποκειμένων ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ εἰδῶν ἔρχεται τὸ ζῷον. καὶ οὐδέν φησι θαυμαστὸν ἐὰν ἡ ψυχή, κρείττων οὖσα, δίδωσι τῇ ἐλάττονι ἑαυτῆς τῇ φαντασίᾳ τὰ εἴδη ὥστε ποιήσειν δῆλα τῷ ζῴῳ. […][38]
>
> The soul contains images of the Becoming and transmits them to the imagination. It is through the imagination that the living being gets the reminiscence and the perception of images found in the soul. Synesius states that it is not strange that the soul, despite its superior status, transmits images to the imagination, which is inferior, so that they can become perceivable by the living being.

Reading this scholion confirms that the main goal of Synesius' entire demonstration is the final relation of the second proportion. Indeed, it proves that the soul contains the images of Becoming. Assuming that it contains all of them, oneiric images can belong indiscriminately to the past, the present and the future. Therefore, according to Synesius' reasoning, the bodily senses are completely useless in the human cognitive process: every image belonging to the realm of Becoming has its own origin in the soul, even before any information reaches the imaginative spirit from the outside. Thus, according to Synesius, oneiromancy is a form of knowledge that is completely internal and advances the human being to the divine realm.

As the Byzantine scholia confirm, Synesius moved the source of dreams—traditionally conceived as external to the human being—into the soul. Synesius strongly believed in the prophetic power of dreams. For this reason, he could not admit that they did not come from a supernatural entity. By moving the

37 My translation here and elsewhere unless noted otherwise.

38 Firenze, *Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana*, Plut. 60.6, f. 389r.

source of dreams inside the human being, in accordance with both Plato's *Timaeus* and the Neoplatonic doctrine of emanationism, Synesius actually made a more complex operation: he moved the divine realm inside our soul. The only way to communicate, albeit partially, with God, Synesius seems to affirm, consists in entering inside ourselves and trying to comprehend the messages which come to us from the soul, in the form of oneiric images. In a nutshell, dreams are no longer a phenomenon that enters the human being from outside, but rather a product of human interiority.

Synesius' treatise *On Dreams* explores the relationship between humans and the divine realm. The author suggests that the only way that human beings can communicate with God is to return within themselves.[39]

1 Conclusion

Only by analysing the anonymous commentary in detail and using a synoptic comparison with Gregoras' text can one make valid new hypotheses about the real reasons for interest in Synesius' work *On Dreams* at the beginning of the Palaiologan era. Nevertheless, perhaps we should seek the answer to the question in Synesius' knowledge theory. According to Neoplatonic accounts, the author did not believe that human beings could completely comprehend the divine realm while still alive, while their soul was still linked to the body. At most, they could acquire some notions from the supernatural realm, for example, some visions about the future. In other words, a complete knowledge of God is precluded to human beings before their earthly death. If the comprehension of the Creator is not possible (Λόγος), what remains is the study of creatures (λόγοι), that is, the profane literature.

This was particularly relevant to a major cultural debate in fourteenth-century Byzantium. On one side of this debate, there were intellectual circles composed of scholars such as Planudes, Metochites, Moschopoulos, Magister and Gregoras, who favoured the reading of classical, pre-Christian literature. On the other side of the debate, however, were monks who were very sceptical of profane literature. According to one of these, Gregory Palamas, the great defender of the mystical prayers practised by monks on Mount Athos, it is absolutely possible to communicate with God and to comprehend the divine realm

39 In the same manner as his contemporary Augustine of Hippo, who wrote: *Noli foras ire, in teipsum redi, in interiore homine habitat veritas* (*On true religion* 39, 72); "Do not go outward; return within yourself. In the inward person dwells truth." (Bassi 1990, 264).

in a beatific way.[40] If the knowledge of the Logos—the supreme being—was even thinkable, any other science was hardly worthwhile. At most, humanistic culture could be a medium to reach cognition of God: but nothing more than this.

At the beginning of the 14th century, despite the re-conquest of Constantinople in 1261, the geopolitical situation of the eastern Empire was in crisis. Consequently, the Byzantines could not avoid wondering about their own historical identity. Since they were the cultural inheritors of both Athens and Jerusalem, there were a variety of answers to such a dilemma.[41] Thus, some of them believed their historical roots lay in ancient Greece and Rome, others in the Christian tradition and its dogmas.

The common bond between these two different points of view was the return of human beings within themselves: to seize some elements of the divine realm, on the one hand, or to reach a beatific vision of God, on the other. As Friedrich Nietzsche observed, the return of man [*sic*] to himself is typical of periods of crisis.[42]

Bibliography

Primary Sources

Aristotle (1995) Trans. J. Pigeaud, *La verité des songes. De la divination dans le sommeil* (Paris).

Aristotle (2003) Ed. and trans. L. Repici, *Il sonno e i sogni* (Venice).

Artemidorus (2012) Ed. and trans. D. E. Harris-McCoy, *Oneirocritica: Text, Translation, and Commentary* (Oxford).

Athanasius of Alexandria (1994) Ed. and trans. G. J. M. Bartelink, *Athanase d'Alexandrie. Vie d'Antoine*. SC 400 (Paris).

Augustine of Hippo (1990) Ed. And trans. D. Bassi, *S. Agostino. De magistro, de vera religione* (Florence).

Gregory Palamas (2003) Ed. and trans. E. Perrella, *Atto e luce divina. Scritti filosofici e teologici. Testo greco a fronte* (Milan).

Nicephorus Gregoras (1999) Ed. P. Pietrosanti, *Nicephori Gregorae Explicatio in librum Synesii* De Insomniis (Bari).

Nietzsche, F. (1970) *Nietzsche Werke. Kritische Gesamtausgabe. Nachgelassene Fragmente. Herbst 1887 bis März 1888*, Abteilung 8, Band 2 (Berlin).

40 See, mainly, Gregory Palamas' *Triads* (Perrella 2003).

41 Congourdeau 2013, 298.

42 Nietzsche 1970, 11 [119].

Plato (1981) Trans. R. G. Bury, *Timaeus, Critias, Cleitophon, Menexenus, Epistles*, LCL 9, (Cambridge, MA and London).

Plato (1982) Trans. H. N. Fowler, *Euthyphro, Apology, Crito, Phaedo, Phaedrus*, LCL 1 (Cambridge, MA and London).

Plutarch (1969) Ed. F. H. Sandbach, *Plutarch's Moralia. Fragments*, LCL 15 (Cambridge, MA and London).

Pseudo-Nicephorus (1980) Ed. and trans. G. Guidorizzi, *Pseudo-Niceforo. Libro dei sogni* (Naples).

Synesius of Cyrene (1930) Trans. A. Fitzgerald, *The Essays and Hymns* (Oxford and London).

Synesius of Cyrene (1989) Ed. A. Garzya, *Sinesio. Opere, epistole, operette, inni* (Turin).

Synesius of Cyrene (1992) Ed. D. Susanetti, *Sinesio. I sogni* (Bari).

Synesius of Cyrene (2004) Eds J. Lamoureux and N. Aujoulat, *Synésios de Cyrène. Opuscule I*, vol. 4. (Paris).

Synesius of Cyrene (2014) Eds D. A. Russell and H. G. Nesselrath, *De Insomniis. On Prophecy, Dreams and Human Imagination* (Tübingen).

Xenophon (1979) Trans. W. Miller, *Cyropaedia*, LCL 6/2 (Cambridge, MA and London).

Manuscripts

Firenze, *Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana*, Plut. 60.6.

Paris, *Bibliothèque Nationale de France*, gr. 2988.

Secondary Sources

Aujoulat, N. (1983) 'Les avatars de la phantasia dans le Traité des songes de Synésios de Cyrène. I', KOINΩNIA 7, 157–177.

Aujoulat, N. (1984) 'Les avatars de la phantasia dans le Traité des songes de Synésios de Cyrène. II', KOINΩNIA 8, 33–55.

Aujoulat, N. (1988) 'De la Phantasia et du Pneuma Stoïciens, d'après Sextus Empiricus au Corps Lumineux Néo-Platoniciens (Synésios de Cyrène et Hiéroclès d'Alexandrie)', *Pallas* 34, 123–146.

Barnes, T. D. (1986) 'When did Synesius become bishop of Ptolemais?', *GRBS* 27/3, 325–329.

Bregman, J. (1982) *Synesius of Cyrene, Philosopher-Bishop* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London).

Bregman, J. (2010) 'Synesius of Cyrene', in L. P. Gerson (ed.) *The Cambridge History of Philosophy in Late Antiquity* vol. 1 (Cambridge), 520–537.

Bydén, B. (2014) 'Nikephoros Gregoras' Commentary on Synesius, *De Insomniis*', in Russell and Nesselrath (eds), 163–188.

Cameron, A. and Long, J. (1993) *Barbarians and Politics at the Court of Arcadius* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London).

Congourdeau, M.-H. (2013) 'La vita religiosa', in A. Laiou and C. Morrisson (eds) *Il mondo bizantino* (Ital. edn), vol. 3 (Turin), 289–318.

Dagron, G. (1985) 'Rêver de Dieu et parler de soi', in T. Gregory (ed.) *I sogni nel Medioevo* (Rome), 37–55.

Di Pasquale Barbanti, M. (1994) *Filosofia e cultura in Sinesio di Cirene* (Florence).

Di Pasquale Barbanti, M. (1998) *Ochema-pneuma e phantasia nel Neoplatonismo. Aspetti psicologici e prospettive religiose* (Catania).

Du Bouchet, J. and Chandezon, C. (2012) *Études sur Artémidore et l'interprétation des rêves* (Paris).

Guastella, G. (1995) '*Onar idein* / *oneirata legein*. Inganni nella percezione e nel racconto dei sogni', *Annali della Facoltà di Lettere e Filosofia dell'Università di Siena* 16, 18–21.

Guidorizzi, G. (1985) 'L'interpretazione dei sogni nel mondo tardo antico: oralità e scrittura', in T. Gregory (ed.) *I sogni nel Medioevo* (Rome), 149–170.

Guidorizzi, G. (2013) *Il compagno dell'anima* (Milan).

Lacombrade, C. (1951) *Synésios de Cyrène, hellène et chrétien* (Paris).

Marrou, H. I. (1952) 'La «conversion» de Synésios', *Revue des études grecques* 65, 474–484.

Monticini, F. (2017) '… et l'âme créa le rêve. Le traité *Sur les songes* de Synésios de Cyrène', *ByzZ* 110/1, 69–88.

Neil, B. (2015) 'Synesius of Cyrene on Dreams as a Pathway to the Divine', *Phronema* 30/2, 19–36.

Neil, B., Costache, D. and Wagner, K. (forthcoming) *Dreams, Virtue and Divine Knowledge in Early Christian Egypt.*

Oberhelman, S. M. (1980) 'Prolegomena to the Byzantine Oneirokritica', *Byzantion* 50, 487–503.

Oberhelman, S. (1986) 'The Interpretation of Dreams-Symbols in Byzantine Oneirokritik Literature', *ByzSlav* 47, 8–24.

Oberhelman, S. (2008) *Dreambooks in Byzantium: Six Oneirocritica in Translation, with Commentary and Introduction* (Aldershot).

Oberhelman, S. (2014) 'The Dream-Key Manuals of Byzantium', in C. Angelidi and G. T. Calofonos (eds) *Dreaming in Byzantium and Beyond* (Farnham and Burlington, VT), 145–159.

Roques, D. (1987) *Synésios de Cyrène et la Cyrénaïque du Bas-Empire* (Paris).

Russell, D. A. and Nesselrath, H. G. (eds) (2014) *De Insomniis. On Prophecy, Dreams and Human Imagination* (Tübingen).

Schmitt, T. (2001) *Die Bekehrung des Synesios von Kyrene* (Munich).

Tanaseanu-Döbler, I. (2014) 'Synesius and the Pneumatic Vehicle of the Soul in Early Neoplatonism', in Russell and Nesselrath (eds), 125–156.

Terzaghi, N. (1910) 'Synesiana', *Studi italiani di Filologia classica* 18, 32–40.

Timotin, A. (2010) *Visions, prophéties et pouvoir à Byzance* (Paris).

Timotin, A. (2015) 'La réception d'Artémidore dans l'onirocritique byzantine', in G. Weber (ed.) *Artemidor von Daldis und die antike Traumdeutung* (Berlin and Boston), 311–324.

Timotin, A. (2016) 'Techniques d'interprétation dans les clés des songes byzantines', in J. Carroy and J. Lancel (eds) *Clés des songes et sciences des rêves* (Paris), 47–60.

Toulouse, S. (2016) 'Synésios de Cyrène', in R. Goulet (ed.), *Dictionnaire des philosophes antiques* (vol. 6) (Paris), 639–676.

Wilson, N. G. (1962) 'A List of Plato Manuscripts', *Scriptorium* 16, 386–395.

Zambon, M. (2005) 'Il significato filosofico della dottrina dell'OXHMA dell'anima', in R. Chiaradonna (ed.) *Studi sull'anima in Plotino* (Naples), 307–337.

PART 2

Prophetic Dreams and Visions in Imperial Contexts



CHAPTER 5

Dynastic Dreams and Visions of Early Byzantine Emperors (ca. 518–565 AD)

Meaghan McEvoy

Dreams about heirs and the succession are a common type of dream reported of emperors in our ancient sources, whether they presage the accession of an unexpected emperor, or a ruling emperor's death and the rise of his successor.[1] In this chapter, two such dreams or visions, both sixth-century examples, will be explored: firstly, the vision of the emperor Anastasius concerning his nephews and his eventual successor Justin I reported in the *Anonymus Valesianus*, and secondly the accession dream of the emperor Justin II, as recounted by the poet Corippus. It will be suggested that these dreams were largely explicatory, seeking to offer an explanation for an unexpected non-dynastic succession or alternatively to bolster a dynastic but not undisputed accession, and that they reflect common expectations and preoccupations of court circles of their time.

1 Anastasius' Dream

The emperor Anastasius came to the throne in the year 491, and ruled until his death by natural causes in 518.[2] Upon his accession he had married the Augusta Ariadne, widow of the former emperor Zeno, but neither she nor Anastasius had any surviving children.[3] Anastasius did, however, have a number of nephews—Pompeius, Probus and Hypatius—and the emperor's vision late in his life as reported in the *Anonymus Valesianus Pars Posterior* concerns his uncertainty over which of them should succeed him.[4]

1 I am grateful for the comments of the anonymous reviewer, the editors of this volume and to Caillan Davenport for their thoughtful advice on this paper.

2 On the life and reign of Anastasius, see *PLRE* 2, 78–80 and the detailed studies of Haarer 2006 and Meier 2009.

3 Most recently on the life and career of the empress Ariadne, see Croke 2015, esp. 306–308. On the acclamation of Anastasius, see Boak 1919, 38–39.

4 On the various relatives and dynastic connections of Anastasius, see particularly Cameron 1978. Greatrex refers to the dream as reported in the *Anonymus Valesianus* as "an entertaining, if implausible, story": Greatrex 1996, 121, n. 5. See also Haarer 2006, 248.

© KONINKLIJKE BRILL NV, LEIDEN, 2018 | DOI:10.1163/9789004375710_007

Unfortunately, there is little we can say for certain about the contextual background of the *Anonymus Valesianus Pars Posterior*. The text itself survives in only one manuscript dating to the 9th century, while the original appears to have been written between 526–550.[5] It is not clear where it was composed—while Constantinople has been suggested, a western setting, perhaps Ravenna in the orbit of the Ostrogothic court, is more likely, as Croke has argued.[6] According to this text, however, while puzzling over the question of the succession, Anastasius came up with a plan of how to choose between his nephews:[7]

> *... cogitans quem de ipsis faceret post se imperatorem, quodam die iussit eos secum prandere, et intra palatium post prandium meridiari, et singula lecta eis sterni. Et in uno lecto iussit ad capitem regium insigne poni, et quis de ipsis in eodem lecto elegisset dormire, in hoc se debere cognoscere cui regnum postea traderet.*
>
> Considering which one of them he should make his successor, he invited them to have luncheon with him one day, and after luncheon to take their midday siesta within the palace, where he had a couch prepared for each of them. Under the pillow on one couch he ordered the symbol of royalty to be put, and decided that whichever of them chose that couch for his nap, in him he ought to recognise the one to whom he should later turn over the rule.

Anastasius' plan did not work out quite as neatly as he had hoped however: although three couches were prepared, two of the nephews chose to take their nap on one together, and one alone on another couch, leaving the couch unoccupied which actually concealed the royal symbol planted by Anastasius. Seeing this, Anastasius concluded accordingly that none of his nephews should rule after him but was left confused as to whom he should look to as his successor. The text goes on:[8]

> *Haec eodem cogitante et orante cum ieiunio, quadam noctu vidit hominem, qui ita eum admonuit: 'Crastinus qui tibi primus intra cubiculum nuntiatus fuerit, ipse accipiet post te regnum tuum.' Ita factum est ut Iustinus, qui comes erat excubitorum, dum advenisset, ubi directus fuerat ab imperatore,*

5 Croke 2003, 355–356.
6 Croke 2003, 356.
7 *Anonymus Valesianus* 11.13.74 (Rolfe 1939, 555).
8 *Anonymus Valesianus* 11.13.75–76 (Rolfe 1939, 555–557).

> *renuntiaretur ipse ei primus per praepositum cubiculi. Cumque haec cognovisset, coepit gratias deo referre, qui ei dignatus est revelare successorem.*
>
> While he was considering the question with fasting and prayer, one night he saw a man, who advised him as follows: "The person whose arrival shall first be announced to you tomorrow in your bedroom will be the one to receive your throne after you." Now it chanced that Justinus, who was commander of the watch, on coming to a place to which he had been directed by the emperor, was first to be announced to him by his head-chamberlain. And when the emperor knew this, he began to thank God for having deigned to reveal to him who his successor should be.

Anastasius recognised in Justin the next emperor, but according to the text, kept this information to himself, although one day during a procession Justin trod upon the emperor's imperial cloak as he passed him, and Anastasius turned to him and asked, "What is your hurry?"[9] Regardless of the report of this dream, no official action is known to have been taken by Anastasius indicating either a choice of successor on his part, or a designation of Justin I as that successor.

The accession of Justin I in 518 upon the death of Anastasius must indeed have come as something of a surprise to those outside of immediate court circles—and perhaps to those within them too. A number of sources, indeed, comment on this surprise, with Evagrius noting that: "[Justin I] acquired the monarchical rule contrary to all expectation, since there were many prominent members of Anastasius' family who had achieved great prosperity and wielded all the power needed to invest themselves with such a great office."[10] Anastasius, as noted above, had a number of eligible male relatives, yet none of these men succeeded him, and instead the throne went to the unconnected Justin, the *comes excubitorum* branded by some sources as an illiterate Illyrian

---

9 *Anonymus Valesianus* 11.13.77–78: *Cui imperator hoc tantum dixit, 'quid festinas?'* (Rolfe 1939, 557). A similar story of a military man aiming for the throne being chided for treading on or taking hold of the emperor's cloak is told of the general Aspar and the emperor Leo I in Cedrenus 607.17–8 (Bekker 1888, 607). See further Croke 2005, 162–163.

10 Evagrius *HE* 4.1: Περιέθετο δὲ τὴν ἀρχὴν τὴν αὐτοκράτορα πάσης ὑπέρτερον ἐλπίδος, ὅτι γε πολλοὶ καὶ ἔξοχοι καὶ πρὸς πᾶσαν εὐδαιμονίαν ἥκοντες καθειστήκεισαν τῆς Ἀναστασίου συγγενείας, πᾶσάν τε δύναμιν ἐφελκόμενοι τὴν τοσαύτην αὐτοὺς ἀρχὴν περιβαλεῖν ἐξισχύουσαν. (Bidez and Parmentier, 1898, 153; trans. Whitby 2000, 200). These sentiments are echoed by Procopius, at *Wars* I.xi.1 (Dewing 1914, 82–83); see further Vasiliev 1950, 74; also Cameron 1978, 263; Greatrex 1996, 120–121; Haarer 2006, 248; Croke 2007, 16.

peasant.[11] Certainly, in the absence of a designated heir, theoretically the throne was open to any candidate. Yet Anastasius' relatives were not undistinguished: each of the nephews mentioned in his dream—Hypatius, Pompeius and Probus—had held the great honour of the consulship in three successive years (500, 501 and 502),[12] all three brothers held the high rank of *patricius*, and Hypatius had for many years also held the rank of *magister militum* and been actively commanding imperial armies.[13] The non-succession of any of these three imperial nephews must arguably have been as much of a surprise as Justin I's accession.

This is not the only dream related in our sources in connection with the death of Anastasius and the succession of Justin I, although it is the only one which specifically mentions the passing over of Anastasius' nephews and provides a rationale for this eventuality. The *Chronicon Paschale*, and the Chronicles of John Malalas, of Cedrenos and of Theophanes Confessor, all report another dream which Anastasius had shortly before his death. In this dream, Anastasius saw a vision of a man who carried an inscribed volume and who informed the emperor that, because of his greed (in the accounts of the *Chronicon Pascale* and Malalas—in Theophanes it is his "erroneous beliefs" that cause the erasure), he was erasing "fourteen", which he then proceeded to do with his finger. When Anastasius awoke in a panic, his chamberlain Amantius shared that he too had experienced a dream, this one involving a large pig which had seized his cloak in its mouth and shook it, bringing him tumbling to the ground. The emperor appealed to the philosopher and dream-interpreter Proclus for an explanation and was told that these two dreams foretold the imminent death of both emperor and chamberlain.[14]

---

11 On the sources relating to Justin's life and reign, see *PLRE* 2, 648–651. Procopius is, perhaps unsurprisingly, especially negative about Justin's background—see *Anecdota* 6.10–12 (Dewing 1935, 70–73). As Croke notes, as a senior military official, Justin must have possessed at least a degree of literacy, even if he lacked the elite education of others at court: Croke 2007, 18–19.

12 On the careers of the 3 nephews, see *PLRE* 2, 577–581 (Hypatius); 2. 898–899 (Pompeius) and 2. 912–913 (Probus). Also, on their consulships, see Cameron 1978, 260.

13 Though not with any notable successes, as Greatrex notes 1996, 120–121. See for detailed studies on Hypatius, Greatrex 1996; Meier 2014 and Cameron 1978, 263–267. On Hypatius' notable lack of success in the campaign against the rebellious Vitalian under Anastasius, see Evagrius *HE* 3.43 (Bidez and Parmentier 1898, 145; Whitby 2000, 193–194); also Haarer 2006, 170–171. Nevertheless, Greatrex argues that only Hypatius could have been a viable contender for the throne in terms of his prominence in office under his uncle Anastasius, due to the relative obscurity of the other nephews (Greatrex 1996, 135).

14 *Chronicon Paschale* s.a. 518 (Dindorf 1832, 610–611; Whitby and Whitby 1989, 102–103); Theoph. AM 6010 (de Boor 1883, 252–254; Mango and Scott 1997, 248–249; Malalas 16.20 (Dindorf 1831, 408–409; Jeffreys et al. 1989, 229); Cedrenus 635–636 (Bekker 1888, 635–636).

Procopius in turn writes of Justin I's survival following his capture during a military campaign while still a private citizen. When Justin, then a soldier, was imprisoned by a rebellious army of Isaurians, his captor, one John the Hunchback, received a dream. The dream arrived in the night between Justin's capture and planned execution, warning John the Hunchback to release Justin as one day he would have great need of him.[15] John the Hunchback heeded the message and released Justin, who gradually rose through the ranks of the army to great power after this time.[16] As Haarer has noted, it was natural that dreams, prophecies and rumours should arise and be seen as significant at times when there were fears and uncertainties regarding the succession—and "[C]ertainly some might have felt the need for explanation and justification for the election of Justin, a Thracian peasant who had risen through the ranks to become count of the excubitors, the palace guard."[17]

The fullest account of the accession of Justin I is given in the tenth-century *Book of Ceremonies* of Constantine Porphyrogenitus (though taken from the sixth-century account of Peter the Patrician), and it notably makes no mention of Anastasius' nephews in its discussion of the various imperial candidates proposed by different factions.[18] Although the account informs us that there was some lack of order in the events which occurred since there was neither an Augusta nor an Augustus to invest Justin, meetings were held in the palace among the senators, the *candidati* and the *excubitores*, while the people gathered in the Hippodrome to await developments. The *magister* Celer was keen for a decision to be reached quickly so that the election was not taken out of the hands of the government by other factions who were hastier, but arguments continued. The *excubitores* first proclaimed one John and raised him on a shield, but he was pelted with stones by the Blues who objected. The *scholarii* then raised the general Patricius, but the *excubitores* would not have him, and would have killed him had not Justinian, the nephew of Justin, rescued him. The *excubitores* then besought Justinian to take the throne but he refused. Finally, the senators chose Justin, and the imperial clothing was released to him by the *cubicularii* who had refused to hand it over to any of the previously suggested candidates. Justin was acclaimed by the senators and soldiers, and

---

I am grateful to Roger Scott for the suggestion that the 14 years in fact refers to the length of time between the death of Anastasius in 518 and the Nika riots in 532, and the subsequent execution of Anastasius' nephews Hypatius and Pompeius for their involvement in the riots.

15 Procopius, *Anecdota* 6.4–9 (Dewing 1935, 68–71). See also Haarer 2006, 248.

16 Procopius, *Anecdota* 6.10–12 (Dewing 1935, 70–73).

17 Haarer 2006, 247.

18 Greatrex 1996, 120–121; also Greatrex 2007, 102 and Croke 2007, 16–18.

then acclaimed in the Hippodrome by the people gathered there.[19] Justin I's accession was clearly something of a chaotic affair—but of the various candidates suggested by different groups, none of the relatives of Anastasius are mentioned, despite the surprise noted in some sources that they did not succeed the emperor. Anastasius' most prominent nephew, Hypatius, then serving as *magister militum per Orientem*, seems not to have been present in Constantinople at the time of his uncle's death, but based in Antioch in his official capacity.[20]

In addition to these reports of an uncertain situation in the palace following the death of Anastasius, a number of sources, such as the *Chronicon Paschale* and John Malalas, attribute the accession of Justin I to bribery. They allege that the *praepositus* Amantius had given Justin money to distribute with the aim of making the *domesticus* Theocritus emperor, but those to whom Justin gave the funds decided to acclaim him instead, while Justin upon his accession had Amantius and Theocritus swiftly murdered inside the palace.[21] A further potential source of dissent, the general Vitalian who had rebelled against Anastasius in 515 and in whose defeat Justin had been involved as a senior officer,[22] was also neutralised early in the reign. He first returned to power in Constantinople as a *magister militum praesentalis*, and was appointed consul for 520, before being murdered in his consular year.[23]

---

19 Constantine Porph. *Book of Ceremonies* 1.93 (Moffatt and Tall 2012, 426–430). See also Boak 1919, 39–40 and Haarer 2006, 247–248. As Mango and Scott note, Justin's letter to Pope Hormisdas on his election (1 August 518, *Collectio Avellana* 141, Guenther 1895, 586) asserted that the army, senate and palace officers had elected him: Mango and Scott 1997, 252, n. 18); see also Vasiliev 1950, 162.

20 Greatrex 1996, 121; Haarer 2006, 247. In a similar case, the son-in-law of the emperor Marcian, Anthemius, may have missed out on the throne in 457 due to his absence from Constantinople at the crucial moment also—see Pfeilschifter 2014, 147–148 and further McEvoy 2016b, 489, n. 31.

21 *Chronicon Paschale* s.a. 519 (Dindorf 1832, 611–612; Whitby and Whitby 1989, 102–103); Malalas 17.2 (Dindorf 1831, 410–411; Jeffreys et al. 1986, 230–231); also Evagrius *HE* 4.2 (Bidez and Parmentier 1898, 153; Whitby 2000, 200–201); Marc.com. s.a. 519 (Croke 1995, 41); Theoph. AM 6011 (de Boor 1883, 254–256; Mango and Scott 1997, 249–250). See for a detailed analysis of Amantius' supposed conspiracy in 518, Greatrex 2007, 99–105.

22 See Greatrex 1996, 135–136; also Haarer 2006, 164–179 and 249.

23 See *PLRE* 2, 1171–1176. Also Evagrius *HE* 4.3 (Bidez and Parmentier 1898, 254; Whitby 2000, 201–202); Marc.com. s.a. 519 (Croke 1995, 41); Malalas 17.5 (Dindorf 1831, 412; Jeffreys et al. 1986, 231) and Theoph. AM 6011 (de Boor 1883, 254–256; Mango and Scott 1997, 249–250) and 6012 (de Boor 1883, 256–267; Mango and Scott 1997, 252–254). For discussion, see Greatrex 2007, 105–106 and Croke 2007, 23–24.

The family of the late emperor Anastasius, however, was left untouched at this stage: Hypatius and Pompeius continued to lead armies,[24] and as Alan Cameron demonstrated some years ago, the family itself continued to amass considerable wealth and forge prestigious alliances with other aristocratic clans.[25] Justin I appears to have been happy to trust officers with whom he had himself served, and Hypatius was one of these, regardless of his connection to the previous ruling emperor.[26] Not until the involvement of Anastasius' nephews Hypatius and Pompeius in the Nika riots and the abortive acclamation of Hypatius as emperor in place of Justinian in 532 did the family fall from grace, and even then, only briefly. Hypatius and Pompeius were then executed, while the third nephew of Anastasius, Probus, was exiled and his property confiscated.[27] Yet only a year later Hypatius and Pompeius were posthumously rehabilitated and their property was restored to their sons, while other members of the family were recalled from exile, and Hypatius even received an epitaph describing him as "a champion of the Romans".[28]

Although Anastasius himself had not been born into a ruling dynasty, expectations of dynastic succession were widespread in the fourth to sixth centuries, and he himself had based his claim to the throne at least in part upon his marriage to the late emperor's widow Ariadne and through her, to the previous ruling dynasty.[29] And while the Roman imperial office was not constitutionally hereditary, the trend towards dynastic succession was present from the earliest days of the principate, and had shown every sign of increasing from the 4th century onwards through the long reigns of the Constantinian and Theodosian dynasties.[30] Emperors almost inevitably aimed to hand their

24 Greatrex 1996, 121 and 129. The youngest nephew, Probus, also held a military command under Justin I: Greatrex 1996, 129.

25 Cameron 1978, 263. As Greatrex points out, it is interesting that it was not any of Anastasius' relatives, but rather one of the late emperor's prime enemies, who was killed early in the reign of Justin I: Greatrex 1996, 134.

26 Greatrex 1996, 140.

27 Cameron 1978, 263–264.

28 *Greek Anthology* 7.591 (Paton 1917, 316–317). See further on the cenotaph, Cameron 1978, 264 and generally on the involvement of Hypatius and Pompeius in the Nika riots, see Cameron 1978, Greatrex 1997 and Pfeilschifter 2014, 178–210.

29 On dynastic succession generally in this period, see McEvoy 2010, 157–158; on the involvement of Ariadne in Anastasius' acclamation, see Croke 2015 and Meier 2009, 63–75 and 2010. Notably, however, the emperor Zeno's brother Longinus who was certainly expected by some to succeed him, was also passed over in 491 in favour of the unrelated Anastasius—see Evagrius *HE* 3.29 (Bidez and Parmentier 1898, 125; Whitby 2000, 164; Theoph. AM 5982 (de Boor 1883, 206–209; Mango and Scott 1997, 205–207); Haarer 2006, 1, 3, 23; Croke 2015, 307.

30 See for discussion, McEvoy 2010, 157–158 and recently Börm 2014 on the 4th century.

position on to sons, if they had them, or to other male relatives where possible. The dream of the emperor Anastasius relating to the accession of Justin I, rather than any of his nephews, provides a post-factum explanation therefore for an otherwise unexpected eventuality—not only the accession of Justin, but also the non-accession of his nephews.

It has been suggested that to those in power at Constantinople, the accession of Justin may have been less unexpected than sources such as Evagrius and Procopius assert—he was a high-ranking soldier, his involvement in the victory over Vitalian was in his favour, and the emperor Anastasius' most prominent nephew, Hypatius, was absent from the scene.[31] His Christological views are also likely to have worked in his favour: he was a solid Chalcedonian, and after the religious riots against the Monophysite Anastasius in Constantinople in the 510s, it was unlikely a non-Chalcedonian emperor would be acclaimed in 518.[32] As Greatrex points out, Justin's commitment to Chalcedon would prove to be complete, while the house of Anastasius was divided in its religious loyalties.[33]

Interestingly, no attempt is made in Anastasius' dream to suggest that Justin was chosen because he was the best man for the job—no catalogue of his virtues which made him fit for office over the emperor's nephews is presented.[34] This is in contrast to ways in which a source such as Themistius in the late 4th century would justify the accession of Theodosius, a man unconnected at the time of his accession with the ruling dynasty; unlike Theodosius, Justin I is not presented as a paragon whose merit could not be passed over when the need for a new emperor arose.[35] The fact that much of the *Anonymus Valesianus Pars Posterior* is given over to praise of the Ostrogothic king Theoderic also suggests that its author was acquainted with traditional modes of praising a ruler, making his lack of interest in Justin's merits all the more interesting.[36] The less than flattering view of Procopius that Justin was "a doddering old man" upon his accession who could not even sign his own name and was incapable of comprehending the business of state may be an overstatement,[37] but the *Anonymus Valesianus'* explanation of how he came to claim the throne makes no assertions as to his possession of any special talents—and, perhaps, a divine intervention seemed the only viable explanation. The dream of Anastasius

31 Haarer 2006, 249. See also Croke 2007, 18.

32 Greatrex 1996, 136; Haarer 2006, 247 and Croke 2007, 18–19.

33 Greatrex 1996, 138. Also Cameron 1978, 272.

34 On such catalogues in general, see McEvoy 2013, 24–36.

35 On Themistius' presentation of Theodosius I, see Heather and Moncur 2001, 213–216.

36 For the author's praise of Theoderic's virtues, see e.g. *Anonymus Valesianus* 12.58 (Rolfe 1939, 544).

37 Procopius, *Anecdota* 6.10–12 (Dewing 1935, 70–73).

regarding his nephews is not recounted in other sixth-century sources relating to the death of Anastasius and the succession of Justin I. However, if we accept Croke's argument as to the location for the composition of the *Anonymus Valesianus*, it seems that in far off-Ravenna an explanation for this unexpected non-dynastic succession in the East was desired.

2 Justin II's Dream

The second imperial dream examined here relates to the death of Justinian I and the succession of his nephew—another Justin, this time Justin II—in 565. This dream is reported in the oration of Corippus, a text described by Averil Cameron as somewhere between epic and panegyric, and thus a different genre of writing to the historical chronicle, the *Anonymus Valesianus*.[38] It was an oration certainly aimed at a court audience in Constantinople, and performed before 568.[39] The report of the dream itself comes very early in the text, as news breaks of the death of the emperor Justinian, of which the new emperor, Justin II, remains unaware. According to Corippus:[40]

> *Nondum plena quies victos laxaverat artus cum virgo, superas caeli demissa per auras, aspectu clemens et gressu laeta pudico, purpureas velata comas oculisque benigna … divinos stetit ante pedes, dextraque coronam imposuit, sanctoque caput diademate cinxit; Augustoque virum circumdans mitis amictu, 'te decet hic habitus, regnantum maxime', dixit, 'terribilis princeps et amabilis omnibus idem, a magno dilecte deo, divalis origo … Sustulit haec nox alma patrem. Fortissimo, surge. Te expectat, Iustine, dies. Tu proximus heres, te pater ominpotens divino ornavit honore, te dominum sacrae firmavit avunculus aulae.*
>
> The deepest rest had not yet relaxed and overcome his limbs when the Virgin, gliding down through the upper side of heaven … stood before his divine feet and put the crown on him with her right hand, circling his head with the holy diadem, and clothed him gently with the imperial robe. 'This clothing becomes you, greatest of rulers,' she said, 'an emperor to be feared by all and to be loved by all, beloved of great God, divine

38 Cameron 1976a, 2.

39 On the courtly audience for the oration, see Cameron 1976a, 2, 4–7. On the dating, see also 1976b, 54–55.

40 Corippus, *In Praise of Justin II*, 1.30–48 (Cameron 1976, text at 37–38, translation at 87–88).

> stock … This gracious night has carried off your father. Brave one, arise. The day awaits you, Justin. You are the next heir. The almighty father has honoured you with the divine office, your uncle has appointed you the lord of the holy court.'

Justin II apparently showed grief and reluctance, but the Virgin Mary urged him on, declaring:[41]

> *Proice tristitiam … Succede labori, atque regendarum sudores suscipe rerum. Est virtus roburque tibi, praestantior aetas, prudens consilium, stabilis mens, sancta voluntas, et rerum custos vigilantia, dignaque caelo vestra gubernatrix lati sapientia mundi … tibi serviet orbis, fortia virtutum miratus facta tuarum. Quisquis erit vestrae per se cadet invidus aulae adficietque viros legum pius ensis iniquos.*
>
> Cast away your sadness … Take on your task and undertake the toil of ruling. You have virtue and strength, your age is excellent; you have sound judgement, a stable mind,[42] a holy willingness and vigilance watching over all and your own wisdom, worthy of heaven, guardian of the wide earth … All the world shall serve you, marvelling at the brave accomplishments of your virtue. Whoever grudges your reign shall fall through his own actions, and the pious sword of the law shall come down upon the unjust.

The mention at the end of this part of the text of any who might oppose Justin II's accession is significant as a hint of potential dissent: though Justin II was the nephew of the late emperor, he was not the only nephew, and nor was he his designated heir, for Justinian had in fact named no heir and, like the emperor Anastasius, had a number of eligible male relatives.[43] Justin was the son of Justinian's sister Vigilantia, and he was married to Sophia, the niece of the late empress Theodora, so his connections were certainly prestigious.[44] He had

41 Corippus, *In Praise of Justin II*, I.48–60 (Cameron 1976, text at 38, translation at 88).

42 On the appearance of the Theotokos to Justin, see Cameron 1976a, 129. The Virgin's mention of Justin II's 'stable mind' is perhaps unfortunate given that the emperor went insane in 474, but Corippus' text dates to the beginning of the reign when this development was presumably not foreseen.

43 Cameron 1976a, 130.

44 For Justin II's connections, see *PLRE* 3, 754–756 and those of his wife Sophia, also *PLRE* 3, 1179–1180.

served as *curopalates* since the 550s;[45] this was a relatively high-ranking role at court but he had not been named co-Augustus or even Caesar by Justinian.[46] In addition, he had arguably more distinguished relations, including the two elder sons of Germanus, a deceased cousin to Justinian who had been a powerful general, from a branch of the family popular with the military. Germanus' eldest son, who was also named Justin, was serving as *magister militum* on the Danube at the time of the emperor Justinian's death, having previously won victories in the Balkans; his absence from the city of Constantinople itself was likely a decisive factor in the succession of his cousin instead.[47]

A sense of the hurried acclamation of Justin II and the initial concealment of the death of Justinian is apparent from our surviving sources—according to Evagrius, Justin II donned the purple after his uncle, but "[N]o one knew of Justinian's demise or Justin's proclamation except his entourage until he appeared in the Hippodrome to accomplish and experience what was customary for royalty".[48] His accession therefore took place upon the same day as the death of Justinian on 14 November, 565, the speed of the event also indicating the expectation of conflict should there be a delay or a chance for a rival to reach the city.[49] Invoking divine support, as the dream Corippus describes does, was one way of shoring up Justin II's position, which was less secure than Corippus might have us believe. The appearance of the Virgin in Justin's dream draws on the familiar theme in Byzantine imperial ideology of the relationship between

45 On the position of *curopalates*, see Whitby 1987.

46 The naming of Caesars in this era was uncommon but had occasionally occurred in the 5th century, as in the case of Valentinian III, named Caesar in 424 prior to his accession as Augustus in 425 (see McEvoy 2013, 230–232), and during the troubled reign of Zeno (see Croke 1983). Furthermore, as Croke has pointed out, evidence exists to present a clear period also when Justinian himself had been Caesar from 525–527, prior to his elevation as co-Augustus with his uncle Justin I: see Croke 2007, 44–45. As Whitby has noted, following the acclamation of Justin II who rose from the post of curopalates, the post itself became a more significant one which tended to be held by key supporters of the emperor himself: see Whitby 1987, 469–76.

47 On the other heirs of Justinian, see Cameron 1976a, 130; Cameron 1976b, 51. Although the absence of Justin the son of Germanus from the city and his inability to claim the throne may perhaps be compared with the absence of Hypatius and the succession of Justin I in 518, the key difference remains that Justin II had theoretically an equal dynastic claim to that of his cousin, while Justin I had none. Once again however, proximity to the court is seen to be crucial to securing the throne in this era.

48 Evagrius *HE* 5.1: οὔτε τὴν ἀποβίωσιν Ἰουστινιανοῦ οὔτε τὴν ἀνάρρησιν Ἰουστίνου τινὸς ἐγνωκότος πλὴν τῶν οὔτε τὴν ἀνάρρησιν Ἰουστίνου τινὸς ἐγνωκότος πλὴν τῶν ἀμφ' αὐτόν, μέχρις οὗ κατὰ τὴν ἱπποδρομίαν ἐφάνη τὰ νόμιμα τῆς βασιλείας δράσων τε καὶ πεισόμενος. (Bidez and Parmentier 1989, 195; trans. Whitby 2000, 254).

49 See Cameron 1976a, 126 on the swift carrying out of the acclamation.

God and the emperor, such as coronation by a divine individual, a motif which goes back to the 4th century when emperors might be depicted on coinage being crowned by the hand of God.[50] In addition, appeals to the Theotokos were becoming an increasingly common feature of Constantinopolitan public life, and Justin II and his wife Sophia were to show particular devotion to Mary, building a chapel to house the Virgin's robe at Blachernae and a reliquary to hold her girdle in the church of Chalkopraeteia near Hagia Sophia.[51]

While rivals to Justin II's accession might have been feared, no disturbances are in fact recorded, and Corippus' detailed account of the elevation of Justin II names a number of influential high-office-holders, indicating the new emperor's strong support at court.[52] His accession has been described as a "well-managed senatorial coup",[53] and in Corippus' oration, the praepositus Callinicus is given the task of finally persuading Justin to accept his acclamation.[54] The speech given by Callincus in Corippus' oration urging Justin to take up the throne indicates the imperative of establishing the new emperor's claim and the awkwardness of his not having been designated as heir by Justinian—Callinicus declares:[55]

> *Augustum, Iustine, genus, te principe dignum, te dominum sacrae quis non praedixerat aulae, cum magni regeres divina palatia patris, par extans curis, solo diademate dispar, ordine pro rerum vocitatus cura palati? Dispositu nam Caesar eras: cum sceptra tenerat fortis adhuc senior, regni tu summa regebas consilio moderata gravi. Nil ille peregit te sine, magnanimus seu fortia bella moveret foedera seu pacis cum victis victor iniret.*
>
> Who had not foretold, Justin, scion of emperors, that you were worthy to be our prince, that you would be the lord of the divine court, when you ruled over the holy palace of your great father, equal to him in responsibility, differing only in that you did not have the diadem, with the name of cura palati to suit your actual duties. For in practice you were Caesar. Even while your elder was still strong and held the power, you controlled

50 From the late Roman period, claims for coronation by the hand of God include, for example, early coins of the emperor Arcadius—see *Roman Imperial Coinage* ix. 7, 41a.

51 Cameron 1976b, 66–67. See further on his religious foundations as emperor, Theoph. AM 6058 (de Boor 1883, 373; Mango and Scott 1997, 355–356.

52 On the key members of the court specifically mentioned by Corippus, see Cameron 1976a, 127–129.

53 Cameron 1976b, 51.

54 See Cameron 1976a, 132 and the detailed discussion at *PLRE* 3, 753–754.

55 Corippus, *In Praise of Justin II*, I. 129–143 (Cameron 1976, text at 40, translation at 89–90).

> the most important parts of his kingdom, and kept them controlled by your sober judgement. He achieved nothing without your aid, whether in the loftiness of his counsels he was conducting bold wars or whether as victor he was making treatises with the vanquished.

Despite Callinicus' assurances, however, Justin II's position was not so secure that rivals could be ignored: his cousin Justin was recalled from his command on the Danube, despatched to Alexandria and murdered soon after Justin II's accession.[56] Once again what we find here in this dream attributed to Justin II is a post-factum justification of an accession which might otherwise not have been expected, or at least not guaranteed. Justin II's claims to the throne were certainly stronger than those of his predecessor Justin I, yet the report of his dream is symptomatic of the insecurity of his reign in its early stages. Corippus was writing at Constantinople for an imperial and court audience about contemporary events, and part of his oration was perhaps delivered upon the occasion of Justin II taking up the consulship on January 1st 566.[57] Yet despite the different contexts in which the dreams of the emperors Anastasius and Justin II are reported, both serve a similar purpose: to explain the transfer of the throne to certain individuals and the passing over of other candidates. In so doing they testify to the need for such explanations in court circles and perhaps also in other contexts, as well as the general expectation of dynastic succession, or at least dynastic claimants to the throne, in the 6th century.

2.1 *Dreams and Roman Emperors*

Dreams, visions and portents relating to the succession are common devices in literary sources across this period,[58] and although often Christianised, as we see in the dream of Justin II, have their antecedents in the period of pre-Christian Roman rule. Suetonius reports, for example, that the emperor Nero in the last days of his reign was admonished in a dream to take the sacred chariot of Jupiter Optimus Maximus from its shrine to the house of Vespasian;

---

56 On the murder of Justin II's cousin Justin, see Evagrius *HE* 5.2 (Bidez and Parmentier 1898, 196–197; Whitby 2000, 256) and Theoph. AM 6063 (de Boor 1883, 376; Mango and Scott 1997, 360–361). As Mango and Scott note (1997, 355 n. 4), Theophanes' account of Justin II's accession does not mention the death of his cousin in 566, delaying the report of the event until a year later so as to appear in the guise of crushing a usurpation rather than the elimination of a rival with potentially equal claims to the throne.

57 On the dating, see Cameron 1976a, 2. Cameron suggests some of the poem was added later but the whole was complete by 568: Cameron 1976b, 54–55.

58 See for example Amm. Marc. 21.1.6 (Rolfe 1940, 92–93); Claudian, *Gildo* 1.213 (Platnauer 1922, 114).

Cassius Dio reports that he was inspired to write and publish a little book about the dreams and portents which gave Septimius Severus reason to hope for imperial power; while Severus himself dreamt of being suckled by a she-wolf.[59] According to Ammianus Marcellinus, among the various frightening omens of the death of the emperor Constantius II in 361 was a dream:[60]

> *Namque et nocturnis imaginibus terrebatur, et nondum penitus mersus in somnum, umbram viderat patris obtulisse pulchrum infantem, eumque susceptum et locatum in gremio suo, excusam sibi proiecisse longius sphaeram, quam ipse dextera manu gestabat. Id autem permutationem temporum indicabat, licet interpretantes placentia responderent.*
>
> [A]t night he was alarmed by apparitions, and when he was not yet wholly sunk in sleep, the ghost of his father seemed to hold out to him a fair child; and when he took it and set it in his lap, it shook from him the ball which he held in his right hand and threw it to a great distance. And this foretold a change in the state, although the seers gave reassuring answers.

Constantius II died only days later, leaving the throne to his rebellious cousin Julian, whose reign, the last of his dynasty, survived less than 2 years.[61]

Not all such visions of imperial demises or future successions arose from sleep either: the poet Claudian in the late 4th century wrote of the general Stilicho being presented with a consular gown in 400 AD on which was embroidered a scene of his daughter Maria, then married to the emperor Honorius, giving birth to an imperial heir—an event which certainly never occurred.[62] On occasion such portents or visions of the future could even consist simply of observing a future emperor asleep—as Procopius reports in the case of Marcian, whose rest was sheltered by an eagle hovering above him while a

59 Suetonius on Nero's dream: (*Vespasian* 5.6, in Rolfe 1914, 278–279); for Cassius Dio on his dream book and Septimius Severus on his dream, see lxxiii.23 and lxxv.3 (Cary 1927, 116–119 and 164–167). See further on the dreams of emperors earlier in the principate, Harris 2009, 188–190 and 204–206.

60 Amm.Marc. 21.14.1 (Rolfe 1940, 166–167). Constantius' wife was pregnant at the time, with a daughter who would be born posthumously, which was likely also a factor in his dream: see McEvoy 2016a, 155–159.

61 Julian himself, according to Ammianus Marcellinus, also had a dream about his accession the night before the soldiers acclaimed him as Augustus (Amm. Marc. 21.1.6 in Rolfe 1940, 92–93); See also Harris 2009, 220.

62 Claud. *Stil.* II.341–347 (Platnauer 1922, 26–29). See further on the dynastic hopes of Stilicho, McEvoy 2013, 161–162.

captive in North Africa, an episode which the Vandal king Geiseric recognised as a foreshadowing of Marcian's future accession.[63]

When our sources report imperial dreams in the early Byzantine period, they are predominantly dreams concerned with the succession. Whether explaining an imperial accession, an imperial downfall or the passing over of imperial heirs, such dreams reflect the preoccupations of court society of the time, the expectations of dynastic succession, and the anxieties surrounding periods of regime-change. Yet—to raise a final question—were emperors really supposed to spend their time dreaming? One of the virtues for which we frequently find emperors praised in our ancient sources is their vigilance and their watchfulness over the wellbeing of their subjects—not their luxurious sleep habits or exotic dreams. According to Seneca, writing in the 1st century, "the watchfulness of Caesar guards all men's sleep",[64] while Ammianus in the 4th century praises the emperor Julian fulsomely for his discipline in needing little sleep and putting the night hours to good use:[65]

> *Hinc contingebat ut noctes ad officia divideret tripertita, quietis et publicae rei et musarum, quod factitasse Alexandrum legimus Magnum; sed multo hic fortius. Ille namque aenea concha supposita, brachio extra cubile protento pilam tenebat argenteam, ut cum nervorum vigorem sopor laxasset infusus, gestaminis lapsi tinnitus abrumperet somnum. Iulianus vero absque instrumento, quotiens voluit evigilavit, et nocte dimidiata semper exsurgens, non e plumis vel stragulis sericis ambiguo fulgore nitentibus, sed ex tapete et sisyra … atque in tanto rerum defectu, explorate rei publicae munera cuncta curabat. Post quae ut ardua et seria terminata, ad procudendum ingenium vertebatur … Et haec quidem pudicitiae virtutumque sunt signa nocturna.*
>
> [H]e divided his nights according to a threefold schedule—rest, affairs of state, and the Muses, a course which Alexander the Great used to practise; but Julian was far more self-reliant. For Alexander used to set a bronze basin beside his couch and with outstretched arm hold a silver ball over it, so that when the coming of sleep relaxed the tension of his muscles, the clanging of the ball as it fell might break off his nap. But Julian could wake up as often as he wished, without any artificial means.

63 Procopius, *Wars*, III. iv.4–9 (Dewing 1916, 34–37).

64 Seneca, *De Consolatione ad Polybium*, 7 (Basore 1932, 374–375).

65 Amm.Marc. 16.5.4–8 (Rolfe 1935, 216–219). On the alleged self-control of the emperor Julian generally, see Matthews 1989, 88.

> And when the night was half over, he always got up, not from a downy couch or silken coverlets … but from a rough blanket and rug … In these austere conditions he paid diligent heed to all his public duties. And after bringing these (as his lofty and serious tasks) to an end, he turned to the exercise of his mind … These, then, were the nightly evidences of his self-restraint and his virtues.

The emperor Justinian too, a few centuries later again, is praised by John Lydus as "the emperor who never sleeps"—spending the night when his subjects were sleeping attending to vital matters of state.[66] Yet such habits are susceptible of malicious redeployment too—according to Procopius, in his infamous *Secret History*, Justinian's night-time sleeplessness was an indication of a demonic nature:[67]

> Ἦν τε ἄυπνός τε ὡς ἐπὶ πλεῖστον εἰπεῖν … ὥραν τε, ἂν οὕτω <τύχοι>, καταδαρθὼν μίαν, εἶτα περιπάτους ἀεὶ οὕτω <τύχοι>, καταδαρθὼν μίαν, εἶτα περιπάτους ἀεὶ ποιούμενος τὸν ἄλλον κατέτριβε χρόνον. καίτοι εἰ τοῦτον αὐτὸν καιρὸν ἐς πράξεις δαπανᾶν ἀγαθὰς ἤθελεν, ἐπὶ μέγα ἄν τι εὐδαιμονίας ἐκεχωρήκει τὰ πράγματα. νῦν δὲ τῇ φύσεως ἰσχύϊ ἐπὶ τῷ Ῥωμαίων πονηρῷ χρώμενος ξύμπασαν αὐτῶν τὴν πολιτείαν ἐς τὸ ἔδαφος καθελεῖν ἴσχυσεν. ἐγρηγορέναι τε γὰρ διηνεκὲς καὶ ταλαιπωρεῖν καὶ πονεῖσθαι οὐκ ἄλλου τοῦ ἕνεκα ἔργον πεποίηται ἢ ὥστε κομπωδεστέρας ἀεὶ καθ' ἑκάστην τοῖς ὑπηκόοις ἐπιτεχνᾶσθαι τὰς συμφοράς.
>
> [H]e was not given to sleep, as a general thing … after sleeping perhaps one hour he would spend the rest of the time walking about constantly. And yet, if he had been willing to spend just that amount of time in good works, affairs would have advanced to a very high degree of prosperity … For he made it his task to be constantly awake and to undergo hardships and to labour for no other purpose than to contrive constantly and every day more grievous calamities for his subjects. For he was, as has been said, particularly keen in devising and swift in executing unholy deeds, so that in the end even his natural good qualities resulted in the undoing of his subjects.

66 John Lydus, *De magistratibus* 3.55 (Wuensch 1903, 144–145). For a detailed discussion of the sleeplessness of Justinian and the political implications of this presentation of the emperor, see Croke 2011.

67 Procopius, *Anecdota*, 13. 28–33 (translation modified) (Dewing, 1935, 164–167).

3 Conclusion

The habits of rulers were always held up to scrutiny in the Byzantine world, and vigilance was more valued than sleep. Perhaps for that reason when sources do report upon the dreams of emperors, they are most often about matters of great import—such as the imperial succession. Emperors might dream infrequently, and sleep was perhaps a luxury in an imperial life, but when they did dream they had portentous dreams—at least so far as our sources report them. And while perhaps those dreams discussed here, of Anastasius and Justin II, might really be regarded as literary devices rather than actual imperial dreams—stories which explained unexpected courses of events through divine interventions or revelations—they can nevertheless tell us much about the preoccupations of the time with matters of imperial dynastic succession and court politics.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

Ammianus Marcellinus (1935–1939) Trans. J. C. Rolfe, *Res gestae*, 3 vols (Cambridge, MA).

Cassius Dio (1927) Trans. E. Cary, *Roman History Books LXXI–LXXX* (Cambridge, MA).

Cedrenus (1838–1839) *Synopsis historion* Ed. I. Bekker, Georgius Cedrenus, *Compendium historiarum*, 2 vols (Bonn).

Chronicon Paschale (1832) Ed. L. Dindorf, CSHB (Bonn). Trans. M. Whitby and M. Whitby (1989) *Chronicon Paschale, 284–628 AD* (Liverpool).

Claudian (1922) Trans. M. Plautnauer, *The War against Gildo*, in *Claudian*, 2 vols (Cambridge, MA).

Claudian (1922) Trans. M. Plautnauer, *On Stilicho's Consulship*, in *Claudian*, 2 vols (Cambridge, MA).

Anonymus Valesianus (1939) Trans. J. C. Rolfe in *Ammianus Marcellinus: Res gestae* vol. 3, (Cambridge, MA).

Collectio Avellana (1895) Ed. O. Guenther, CSEL 35, 2 vols (Prague, Vienna, Leipzig).

Constantine Porphyrogennetos (2012) Trans. A. Moffatt and M. Tall, *The Book of Ceremonies*, 2 vols (Canberra).

Corippus (1976a) Ed. A. Cameron, *Flavius Cresconius Corippus: In laudem Iustini Augusti minoris: Libri IV* (London).

Evagrius, *HE* (1898) *The Ecclesiastical History of Evagrius with the Scholia*, ed. J. Bidez and L. Parmentier (London). Trans. M. Whitby (2000) *The Ecclesiastical History of Evagrius Scholasticus* (Liverpool).

Ioannes Lydus (1903) Ed. R. Wuensche, *De magistratibus populi Romani* (Leipzig).
Malalas, John (1832) Ed. L. Dindorf, *Chronographia* (Bonn). Trans. E. Jeffreys, M. Jeffreys, R. Scott et al. (1986) *The Chronicle of John Malalas, a translation* (Melbourne).
Marcellinus Comes (1995) Trans. B. Croke, *The Chronicle of Marcellinus: A Translation and Commentary* (Sydney).
Paton, W. R. (1917) *The Greek Anthology* vol. II (Cambridge, MA).
Procopius (1914–1928) Trans. H. B. Dewing, *History of the Wars*, 5 vols (Cambridge, MA).
Procopius (1935) Trans. H. B. Dewing, *Secret History*, or *Anecdota* (Cambridge, MA).
Seneca (1932) Trans. J. W. Basore, *De consolatione ad Polybium*, in *Seneca: Moral Essays* (Cambridge, MA).
Suetonius (1914) Trans. J. C. Rolfe, *Vespasian* in *Lives of the Caesars* (Cambridge, MA).
Theophanes (1883) Ed. C. de Boor, *Chronographia Theophanis*, vol. 1 (Leipzig). Trans. C. Mango and R. Scott (1997), *The Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor: Byzantine and Near Eastern History, AD 284–813* (Oxford).

Secondary Sources

Boak, A. E. R. (1919) 'Imperial coronation ceremonies of the fifth and sixth centuries', *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 30, 37–47.
Börm, H. (2014) 'Born to be emperor: the principle of succession and the Roman monarchy', in J. Wienand (ed.) *Contested Monarchy: Integrating the Roman Empire in the Fourth Century AD* (Oxford), 239–264.
Cameron, Alan (1978) 'The house of Anastasius', *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies* 19, 259–276.
Cameron, Averil (ed.) (1976a) *Flavius Cresconius Corippus: In laudem Iustini Augusti minoris: Libri IV*, edited with translation and commentary (London).
Cameron, Averil (ed.) (1976b) 'The early religious policies of Justin II', *Studies in Church History* 13, 51–67.
Croke, B. (1983) 'Basiliscus the boy-emperor', *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies* 24, 81–91.
Croke, B. (2003) 'Latin historiography and the barbarian kingdoms', in G. Marasco (ed.) *Greek and Roman Historiography in Late Antiquity* (Leiden), 347–389.
Croke, B. (2005) 'Dynasty and ethnicity: emperor Leo I and the eclipse of Aspar', *Chiron* 35, 147–203.
Croke, B. (2007) 'Justinian under Justin: reconfiguring a reign', *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 100, 13–55.
Croke, B. (2011) 'Justinian the sleepless emperor', in G. Nathan and L. Garland (eds) *Basileia: essays on imperium and culture in honour of E. M. and M. J. Jeffreys*, ByzA17 (Sydney), 103–108.
Croke, B. (2015) 'Ariadne Augusta: shaping the identity of the early Byzantine empress', in G. D. Dunn and W. Mayer (eds) *Christians Shaping Identity from the Roman Empire to Byzantium: Studies Inspired by Pauline Allen* (Leiden), 293–320.

Greatrex, G. (1996) 'Flavius Hypatius, quem vidit validum Parthus sensitque timendum: an investigation of his career', *Byzantion* 66, 120–142.

Greatrex, G. (1997) 'The Nika riot: a reappraisal', *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 117, 60–86.

Greatrex, G. (2007) 'The early years of Justin I's reign in the sources', *Electrum* 12, 99–113.

Haarer, F. (2006) *Anastasius I: Politics and Empire in the Late Roman World* (Cambridge).

Harris, W. (2009) *Dreams and Experience in Classical Antiquity* (Cambridge, MA).

Heather, P. and Moncur, D. (2001) *Politics, Philosophy, and Empire in the Fourth Century: select orations of Themistius* (Liverpool).

McEvoy, M. (2010) 'Rome and the transformation of the imperial office in the late fourth–mid-fifth centuries AD', *Papers of the British School at Rome* 78, 151–192.

McEvoy, M. (2013) *Child Emperor Rule in the Late Roman West, AD 367–455* (Oxford).

McEvoy, M. (2016a) 'Constantia: the last Constantinian', *Antichthon* 50, 154–179.

McEvoy, M. (2016b) 'Becoming Roman: the not-so-curious case of Aspar and the Ardaburii', *Journal of Late Antiquity* 9, 483–511.

Matthews, J. (1989) *The Roman Empire of Ammianus* (London).

Meier, M. (2009) *Anastasios I. Die Entstehung des Byzantinischen Reiches* (Stuttgart).

Meier, M. (2010) 'Ariadne—Der "Rote Faden" des Kaisertums', in A. Kolb (ed.) *Augustae. Machtbewusste Frauen am römischen Kaiserhof? Herrschaftsstrukturen und Herrschaftspraxis II* (Berlin), 277–291.

Meier, M. (2014) 'Flavios Hypatios: der Mann, der Kaiser sein wollte', in S. Patzold and K. Ubl (eds) *Verwandtschaft, Name und soziale Ordnung (300–1000)* (Berlin), 73–96.

Pfeilschifter, R. (2014) *Der Kaiser und Konstantinopel: Kommunikation und Konfliktaustrag in einer spätantiken Metropole* (Berlin).

Vasiliev, A. (1950) *Justin I: An Introduction to the Epoch of Justinian the Great* (Washington).

Whitby, Mary (1987) 'On the Omission of a Ceremony in Mid-sixth Century Constantinople: *candidati, curopalates, silentiarii, excubitores* and Others', *Historia* 36, 462–488.

CHAPTER 6

Dreaming of Treason: Portentous Dreams and Imperial Coups in Seventh-Century Byzantine Apocalyptic Discourse

Ryan W. Strickler

The 7th century is rightly known as a period of significant and transformative crises.[1] This is primarily related to the fact that the century witnessed two global empires brought to their knees, and the rise of a newly ascendant Islamic empire. However, it could just as easily be remembered as a century of *coups d'état*. Through most of the 7th century, in addition to external threats, the Byzantine Empire suffered from significant internal instability. The usurper Phocas set the tone from the beginning, seizing power from Maurice in 602 CE after slaughtering the emperor and his family. This act disrupted a fragile peace set in place by the former emperor with the Sassanids and caused enough disruption for the Persians to capitalise and begin a conflict that would last the better part of three decades.[2] A mere eight years into his reign, Phocas met his own end in a coup at the hands of the general Heraclius. After Heraclius' death in 641, his own dynasty was plagued by bloody struggle between siblings vying for succession.[3]

For the Byzantine society, an emperor's legitimacy as God's regent on Earth was tied closely to his ability to guide the empire through the hardships of war and protect the *ecumene* from threats both foreign and domestic. The Byzantine emperor was the head of the state, and the state's successes and misfortunes could be placed directly upon his shoulders.

Considering the cosmic significance of the imperial office, one should not be surprised to see that the Byzantines understood the emperor to be chosen by God himself. Therefore, any attempt to overthrow an emperor immediately created a crisis of legitimacy for his would-be successor, who could potentially be accused of rebelling against God. Whether a coup was considered

1 I thank Bronwen Neil, Pauline Allen, David Olster, Natalie Mylonas, and the anonymous reviewer whose comments have greatly improved this final version.

2 For a succinct account of these events, see Haldon 1990, 35–36.

3 Haldon 1990, 51–52.

© KONINKLIJKE BRILL NV, LEIDEN, 2018 | DOI:10.1163/9789004375710_008

usurpation against divine order, as in the case of Phocas, or God's deliverance from tyranny, in the case of Heraclius, depended not only on the emperor's performance, but also in large part on the ability of imperial partisans to establish a narrative of legitimacy, or conversely, on their ability to delegitimise their political opponents.

One way in which such narratives were constructed by seventh-century Byzantines was through the use of apocalyptic discourse. Persian victories in the wake of Phocas' coup were portrayed by Heraclius' partisans as signals of divine disapproval and an unholy disruption of providential order.[4] Phocas was stigmatised as an enemy of God, and Maurice was honoured as a martyr. Conversely, Heraclius' ascent, itself a coup with no more legal standing than Phocas', was understood to be a restoration of that order, and was accompanied by an almost messianic hope. His contemporaries declared him to be a new Alexander the Great, and the poet George of Pisidia bestowed upon him the title κοσμορύστης, or "Deliverer of the Cosmos".[5] Maximus the Confessor, on the other hand, used apocalyptic rhetoric to critique imperial abuses, a tendency that would, in part, lead to Maximus being tried for treason by Constans II.[6] Byzantine Jews, for their part, used apocalyptic literature to resist oppression at the hands of the Heraclian dynasty by portraying Heraclius as the anti-Messiah.

Byzantines employed apocalyptic discourse by incorporating, among other things, prophecies, dreams, and visions, and to demonstrate that contemporary events were ordained, or at least foreseen, by God himself. This study examines the way in which such phenomena were used by Byzantines from a variety of cultural backgrounds to delegitimise political adversaries and were used by partisans to promote the legitimacy of their patrons. Our focus will be limited to prophecies, dreams and visions found within three documents: the *Historiae* of Theophylact Simocatta, written immediately after Heraclius' defeat of the Persians, the Jewish apocalypse known as the *Sefer Zerubbabel*, written in reaction to Heraclius' anti-Jewish policies, and the *Relatio Motionis*, which records the trial in 655 of Maximus the Confessor in Constantinople.

4 For a detailed study of the Byzantine portrayals of the Persians, see Stoyanov 2011.

5 George of Pisidia, *Heracliad*, 1.65–79 (Pertusi 1959, 198).

6 Cf. the "ending" of *Epistula* 8 (Devreesse 1937). For a study of the relationship of this ending to the rest of *Epistula* 8, see Strickler 2016.

1 Definitions and Sources

1.1 *Apocalypticism and Apocalyptic Discourse*

Let us begin our study with a discussion of the related concepts of apocalypticism and apocalyptic discourse, terms which are often employed without precision. In recent decades, apocalypticism has been the subject of significant scholarly output, particularly from the fields of biblical and early Christian studies. There have been several important studies on Byzantine apocalypticism.[7] However, there has yet to appear as systematic treatment as in earlier cognate fields, and in many ways the insights gained from scholars in these fields have remained underutilised by Byzantine historians and literary scholars. At this juncture, a review of recent scholarship on apocalypticism will be helpful in situating the present study within the field at large.

From the first studies on the subject, Byzantinists have largely understood "apocalypticism" to be confined to the genre of "apocalypse", which is variously defined, based on a scholar's preferred set of recurring tropes. Paul Alexander was among the first to create a methodology for the use of apocalypses as historical sources. Three methodological principles which have endured to the present include, first, the use of *vaticinia ex eventu*, or contemporary events told as prophecy, to determine dating limits of a given apocalyptic text; second, the use of apocalyptic texts to corroborate material from other sources and, in some cases, to provide material not found elsewhere; and, third, the use of levels of apocalypticism to gauge what Alexander referred to as "eschatological tension".[8] Others who have built upon Alexander's work, beginning with Bernard McGinn, consistently conflate apocalypticism with eschatology.[9] While he is careful to note that the two are not strictly synonymous, apocalyptic, according to McGinn, is by definition eschatological.

Scholars of early Jewish and early Christian apocalypticism have permitted a degree of nuance absent from the approach taken by most of their Byzantinist colleagues.[10] Such scholars recognised early that the ambiguity of the term "apocalyptic" necessitated further precision.[11] Nevertheless, there has remained a strong urge to maintain a "family resemblance" definition which includes eschatology as a critical defining feature of apocalypticism.

---

7 E.g. McGinn 1979; Alexander 1985; Olster 2003.

8 Alexander 1968, 1010, echoed by McGinn 1979, 7. See also Alexander 1985, Brandes 1990, 306.

9 McGinn 1979. See also Magdalino 1993, 3–4; Kraft 2012, 214–215.

10 For a review of earlier scholarship in this field, see A. Y. Collins 2011 and Sim 2012.

11 Hanson 1979, 429–444.

Such a definition can be found in the special issue of *Semeia*, which addressed apocalypticism in Jewish and early Christian literature. The goal of the contributors was to create a comprehensive generic construct by which one could recognise an "apocalypse". The result was a definition, articulated by John J. Collins, of "apocalypse" as:

> a genre of revelatory literature with a narrative framework, in which a revelation is mediated by an otherworldly being to a human recipient, disclosing a transcendent reality which is both temporal, insofar as it envisages eschatological salvation, and spatial insofar as it involves another, supernatural world.[12]

This definition has remained extremely influential and has been continually defended by Collins in later studies.[13]

While scholars of apocalyptic in Byzantine literature and earlier fields have largely focused on defining a genre centred on the *eschaton*, this approach is not without critics. David Olster and Gerrit Reinink have noted that much of apocalypticism in the 7th century focused on determining the role of the Byzantines in the order of kingdoms, and on providing assurance of future retribution and restoration.[14] David Sim has noted that ultimately scholars such as John J. Collins failed to account for the fact that early Jewish groups produced apocalypses which are not concerned with eschatology, and that communities existed, such as that at Qumran, which exhibited an eschatological worldview but did not produce a single apocalypse.[15]

As Olster, Reinink and Sim have shown, relying on a generic approach to the study of apocalyptic, particularly linking it existentially to eschatology, is highly problematic. This is particularly true for the study of seventh-century Byzantine literature. Essential tropes ascribed to the so-called apocalyptic genre, such as *vaticinia ex eventu*, can be found in court poetry, homilies, and classicising history, while eschatology is virtually absent or barely apparent in many pseudonymous vision tales.

This does not mean we should dismiss such scholarship altogether. On the contrary, scholars have done well to identify recurring themes to provide a heuristic apparatus to recognise apocalyptic discourse in literature, including

12 Collins 1979, 9.

13 Collins 1999, 2–9 and Collins 2014, 2.

14 Reinink 1992, 149–187; Olster 2003, 255. See also Podskalsky 1972, Olster 1994, Reinink 1982; Reinink 1992; Reinink 1996.

15 Sim 1996, 23–31.

divine revelation and activity, prophecy, dreams, visions, and occasionally eschatology. However, these themes transcend generic boundaries to such a degree that any attempts to limit apocalyptic to a genre become severely limiting and unnecessarily exclusionary. This chapter instead advocates a discursive approach and understands apocalyptic discourse as the use of apocalyptic tropes to attribute political and social crises to divine causation in order to promote the legitimacy of their polity, to delegitimise a political foe, and ultimately to provide meaning and hope in otherwise intolerable circumstances.

1.2 *Dreams, Visions, Prophecy*

This chapter provides a case study of apocalyptic discourse based on the use of dreams, visions, and prophecy as they appear in seventh-century Byzantine literature. Accordingly, it will be useful to define these three closely related phenomena. While significant work has been done in recent years in the fields of classical, late-antique, and later Byzantine dream interpretation, the 7th century has, by and large, not benefitted from these trends.[16] Bronwen Neil has done significant work to remedy this lacuna with her scholarship on the dream theory of Maximus the Confessor and his place within the monastic dream tradition, and by incorporating seventh-century monastic literature more broadly into her recent overview of dream interpretation through early Christianity to the rise of Islam.[17] Neil's insights into the use of dreams to establish spiritual authority and justify violence are clearly observable in the examples I discuss below.

I also make use of Neil's distinction between dreams, which she defines as "any representation appearing to the mind, whether asleep or awake, that is not a visual perception", and visions, "which are usually identified as revelatory and inspired by divine or demonic forces".[18] Examples of both dreams and visions with both divine and demonic origins are presented here, to which we may add a broader category, that of prophecies or supernatural insights into the future. Prophecies can provide the content of dreams and visions, or in

16 Recent years have seen significant work on Byzantine dream theory, e.g. Angelidi and Calofonos 2014. However much work remains to be done on the 7th century: for example, Paul Magdalino 2014 takes no notice of Theophylact Simocatta in his study of dreams in Byzantine histories, beginning his study in the 9th century with Theophanes Continuatus.

17 Neil 2016. I would like to thank Professor Neil for giving me access to Neil (forthcoming), in which she analyses Maximus the Confessor's theory of dreams. Maximus the Confessor was accused of having a dream in 646 which lent support to the exarch of North Africa, Gregory the Patrician, in his attempted coup against Constans II, a charge which Maximus deflected based, in part, on his view of the involuntary nature of dreams. This account bears striking similarity to the one witnessed in Theophylact.

18 Neil 2016, 45.

some cases can stand on their own. In the present chapter, all dreams and visions discussed are prophecies, but not all prophecies are dreams or visions.[19]

1.3 *Sources*

Framing this study within the context of seventh-century Byzantine apocalyptic discourse reveals the wide range of ways that dreams, visions, and prophecies were used in a relatively small selection of sources. As an example of historical writings, we will examine Theophylact Simocatta's *Historiae* and his use of dreams to delegitimise the reign of Phocas while elevating the memory of the emperor Maurice.

The anonymous *Sefer Zerubbabel*, a messianic apocalyptic text written shortly after the Persian defeat, will provide the Jewish perspective on Heraclius' reign, as well as his role as persecutor before the messiah's return. The *Sefer Zerubbabel* is presented as a prophetic vision, offering both *vaticinia ex eventu* and genuine prophecies which, in the end, did not come to pass. I will conclude with an examination of the record of Maximus' trial, the so-called *Relatio Motionis*, which discusses a supposed dream of the Confessor used to support an abortive coup. Both the *Sefer Zerubbabel* and the trial record of Maximus presented treasonous dreams or visions which were seen to undermine the authority of the Heraclian dynasty.

2 Theophylact Simocatta

Let us turn now to the first of our three sources, and the one which will occupy most of our attention, namely the *Historiae* of Theophylact Simocatta. Written during the reign of Heraclius, the *Historiae* is devoted equally to promoting the memory of the fallen emperor Maurice, while condemning and delegitimising the now defeated Phocas. While Heraclius is rarely mentioned, his reign is granted legitimacy by implication.

The *Historiae* opens with a dialogue between the *dramatis personae* of History and Philosophy, which itself is unique to classicising historiography. Through this dialogue, the purpose of the *Historiae* is revealed in dramatic fashion. History laments its suppression under the "Calydonian tyrant" and "centaur" Phocas, while rejoicing in the advent of Heraclius and the patriarch Sergius, who rescued the empire as Heracles rescued Alcestis from Hades.[20]

19 Neil discusses prophetic dreams (Neil 2016, 46). However, I treat dreams and prophecies as related but distinct phenomena.

20 Theophylact Simocatta, *Historiae*, dialog.1.3–6 (de Boor and Wirth 1972, 20–22).

The use of classical tropes is just one method used by Theophylact to delegitimise Phocas and promote the court of Heraclius, by situating them in continuity with the classical tradition.

Book 1 of the *Historiae* is devoted to establishing Maurice as the rightful successor of Tiberius II and God's choice for imperial election.[21] This clear and providential choice is established in contrast to Phocas' presumption and bloodlust, which is in turn rendered blasphemous for its opposition to God's will. The disruption in divine order caused by Phocas' usurpation is so grave that it is the subject of several prophecies, dreams, and visions which occur early and frequently throughout Theophylact's narrative.

No fewer than four prophecies—or more properly, *vaticinia ex eventu*—concerning Maurice's death and subsequent imperial disaster are given in detail. Using a common trope, Theophylact suggests that the actual number exceeds his ability to record them.[22] Theophylact recounts the first prophecy as follows:

> Ἔτους δὲ ἐννεακαιδεκάτου ἐπιστάντος τῷ αὐτοκράτορι, ἡ τῶν μελλόντων προαναγόρευσις γίνεται, τά τε κοινὰ τοῦ κόσμου ἐξομολογοῦνται παθήματα· ἀνὴρ γάρ τις πρὸς τὸν τῇδε κόσμον διαλυσάμενος καὶ ἐν ἀσκήσει θεωρίας τῶν ἀπορρήτων μετειληφὼς ἐπί τε τὸν μονήρη βίον κατακλιθείς, σπάθην γυμνώσας ἀπὸ τοῦ λεγομένου Φόρου … μέχρι τῶν προαυλίων τῶν ἀνακτόρων ξιφήρης διαδραμών, ἅμα τὸν αὐτοκράτορα τοῖς παισὶν ἐν φόνῳ μαχαίρας τεθνήξεσθαι προηγόρευεν.
>
> In the course of the 19th year of the emperor's rule, a prediction of the future occurred and acknowledged the universal sufferings of the world; for a certain man, who had severed himself from the present world, participated in the mysteries through the practice of contemplation, and retired to the solitary life, unsheathed a blade and, after running with sword in hand from the Forum … as far as the palace vestibule, he prophesied that the emperor together with his children would die slain by the knife.[23]

---

21 Theophylact Simocatta, *Historiae*, 1.1.22 (de Boor and Wirth 1972, 42; trans. Whitby and Whitby 1986, 21).

22 Using a standard trope Theophylact notes: "Many other miraculous prophecies of the future occurred in the Roman state, but all eternity would fail us if we should try to record these in greater detail." Theophylact Simocatta, *Historiae*, 8.13.15 (de Boor and Wirth 1972, 311; trans. Whitby and Whitby 1986, 232).

23 Theophylact Simocatta, *Historiae*, 7.12.10 (de Boor and Wirth 1972, 266; trans. Whitby and Whitby 1986, 196).

Here Theophylact depicts an unnamed monk, perhaps a *salos*, or holy fool, actually performing a prophecy within the public precincts of Constantinople.[24] The man's status as a holy man and the spectacle contribute to the gravity of the prophecy.

Theophylact follows this immediately with a similar, though less dramatic account:

> There is a story that in the season of summer Herodian publicly predicted to the emperor Maurice his misfortunes; the man asseverated that the prophetic message had been manifested to him not without divine utterance.[25]

Theophylact provides no information about this Herodian, beyond his being privy to divine utterance, and his apparent access to the emperor. The casual reference to the name, in contrast to the unknown monk mentioned prior, suggests that Herodian may have been known to Theophylact's audience.

The use of monastics or saintly people to deliver these *vaticinia ex eventu* is interesting, particularly as they contain no rebuke as most other contemporary prophecies do. They are not exercising a prophetic office in the biblical sense to speak truth to power, rather they provide apocalypses in the most literal sense by revealing otherwise hidden knowledge. The audience is not made aware of the manner in which the unnamed *salos* or Herodian received their divinely inspired information, and therefore I cannot go further than describing these revelations as prophecies.

Theophylact declares that this event, the future demise of the imperial family, will bring "sufferings to the world".[26] The inclusion of these prophecies, through the mouths of holy men, each corroborating the other, lends a sense of authority to the predictions. Moreover, it illustrates a recurring paradox throughout Theophylact that the events to come, while disturbing the divine order and bearing future disaster, are still inevitable and within God's providence.

While the accounts of the two holy figures—the unnamed *salos* and Herodian—may shock the reader, bestowing prescience upon a holy man is not

---

24 On the phenomenon of the "holy fool", see Ivanov 2006, 1–11.

25 ὥρα δὲ θέρους, καὶ λόγος Ἡρωδιανὸν Μαυρικίῳ τῷ αὐτοκράτορι ἐς τὸ φανερὸν προαναγγεῖλαι τὰ ἀποτεύγματα· ὁ δὲ ἀνὴρ <οὐκ> ἐκτὸς θείας ὀμφῆς κατισχυρίζετο τὰ τῆς προρρήσεως ἐπιφανῆναι αὐτῷ. Theophylact Simocatta, *Historiae*, 7.12.11 (de Boor and Wirth 1972, 266; trans. Whitby and Whitby 1986, 196).

26 Theophylact Simocatta, *Historiae*, 7.12.10 (de Boor and Wirth 1972, 266; trans. Whitby and Whitby 1986, 196).

an unexpected literary device. However, Theophylact's accounts of Maurice's prophesied murder are not limited to *holy* men. In two instances, lay people are given a prophetic revelation of the coming regime change, with no consideration of their relative piety. The first happened in the midst of a mutiny during the campaigns against the Avars. Godwin, a junior military official in the Balkans, recounted to the general Peter a dream in which he had received a royal communique with an unusual greeting. According to Theophylact:

> ἃ δὲ ἔφησε ταῦτα ἐκεῖνά ἐστιν, δόξαι κατ' ὄναρ βασιλικὰς ἐπιπεμφθῆναι αὐτῷ συλλαβάς, τὴν δὲ τῆς ἐπιστολῆς προγραφὴν ἔχειν ἐπὶ λέξεως οὕτως· 'ὁ κύριος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦς ὁ Χριστός, ὁ ἀληθινὸς θεός, ἡ θεία χάρις, ὁ τῶν ἐκκλησιῶν προεστὼς τὰ ἐλλείποντα ἀναπληροῖ εἰς τὸ πᾶσι συμφέρον καὶ προΐστησιν ἐπὶ τοῦ παρόντος τόνδε τῆς νέας δεσπότην.'
>
> [A]nd what he said was this, that it had seemed in a dream that royal missives had been sent to him, and that the salutation of the letter was this, word for word: 'Our Lord Jesus the Christ, the true God, the divine grace, the leader of the churches, accomplishes what is lacking for the advantage of everyone, and for the present promotes this master of the revolt.'[27]

It seems that Godwin is not attempting to justify a coup, as he finds the dream disturbing. Both figures, Godwin and the general Peter, are unsettled by the dream, and remain silent about the prophecy.

The next prophecy was said to have occurred on the day of Maurice's murder. Here, after a night of drunken revelry, a calligrapher in Alexandria received the following vision:

> μεσούσης τοίνυν νυκτός, καὶ γενόμενος κατὰ τὸ λεγόμενον τῆς πόλεως Τύχαιον (χῶρος δ' οὗτος τῆς Ἀλεξανδρείας ἐπίσημος) ὁρᾷ τοὺς ἐπισημοτέρους τῶν ἀνδριάντων ἐκ τῶν βωμῶν καθερπύσαντας καὶ μεγίστην αὐτῷ ἀφιέντας φωνήν, ἐξονομακλήδην τὸν ἄνδρα προσαγορεύσαντας διηγουμένους τε μεγάλῃ καὶ συντόνῳ φωνῇ τὰ κατ' ἐκείνην τὴν ἡμέραν παρηκολουθηκότα συμπτώματα Μαυρικίῳ τῷ αὐτοκράτορι.
>
> In the middle of the night then, as he was approaching the city's Tychaeum, as it is called, he saw the more famous statues stealing down from their pedestals; they emitted to him a very loud utterance, addressing the man

27 Theophylact Simocatta, *Historiae*, 8.6.6 (de Boor and Wirth 1972, 294; trans. Whitby and Whitby 1986, 218).

> [sc. the calligrapher] by name, and in loud and vehement utterance describing the calamities which had attended the emperor Maurice on that day.[28]

The event eventually reached the ears of Peter, the prefect of Egypt, whom Theophylact reveals to be his relative, who ordered the man to keep silent and await the outcome. After messengers heralded Maurice's death nine days later, Theophylact recounts:

> Then, after Peter had discerned the outcome of the events predicted by the statues, or to speak more appropriately, by demons, he publicly paraded the prophecy, brought to prominence the calligrapher, and pointed him out as the authority for the story."[29]

It is interesting that in this instance Theophylact attributes the prophecy of the statues to demons. This is in stark contrast to the earlier prophecies of Maurice's death, which were attributed to holy people, or in Godwin's case, to Christ himself, and may have served a secondary purpose as an object lesson on the risk of drunkenness permitting demonic influence.

The *vaticinia ex eventu* surrounding Maurice's demise suggest a number of interesting observations. First, it is worth noting the diversity of figures who were bearers of prophecy. In the first examples, we have what seem to be holy men, figures who are not surprising as bearers of prophecy. Moreover, they are located in the capital and, in the case of Herodian, had direct access to the emperor himself. They represent both an urban and ecclesiastical source of prophecy, and appear to have been willing participants.

The first two *vaticinia* and their bearers are of a different nature to Godwin and the calligrapher. The latter two were on the periphery, Godwin in the Balkans fighting against the Avars, and the unknown calligrapher in Egypt. Neither were apparently known for their holiness, in fact, the calligrapher received his vision after a night of drinking. Both appear to have been recipients of unexpected and unwanted dreams and visions, whose descriptions differ from the prophecies received by the holy men. Moreover, both men are noteworthy for their relative obscurity. Godwin, while an officer, was no general

---

28 Theophylact Simocatta, *Historiae*, 8.13.10 (de Boor and Wirth 1972, 310; trans. Whitby and Whitby 1986, 231).

29 τῶν τοίνυν προμεμηνυμένων διὰ τῶν ἀνδριάντων, ἢ δαιμόνων εἰπεῖν οἰκειότερον, ὡς διέγνω τὰς ἐκβάσεις ὁ Πέτρος, ἐς τὸ φανερὸν τὴν προαγόρευσιν ἐθριάμβευσε τόν τε εἰς κάλλος γράφοντα ἐς μέσον προὐβάλλετο καὶ κύριον αὐτὸν τῆς ἱστορίας ἐδείκνυεν. Theophylact Simocatta, *Historiae*, 8.13.14 (de Boor and Wirth 1972, 311; trans. Whitby and Whitby 1986, 233).

or person of apparent significance. Likewise, the calligrapher was so obscure that he remained nameless, even after gaining local notoriety once his vision came true.

Finally, while supernatural origins are attributed to all four prophecies, their reception and implications are mixed. For the two holy men, their *vaticinia* spelled disaster in no uncertain terms—the death of Maurice—even if they served to express the inevitability of Phocas' rule, rather than its aberration. Godwin's dream, on the other hand, seems to indicate the approval of Christ himself of regime change, going against the grain of Book 8 which portrays Phocas' ambition and brutality. Finally, in contrast to the first three, we have the calligrapher's vision which is ascribed to demons.

The simplest explanation for the variation of prophecies is the result of Theophylact's varied sources.[30] Perhaps Theophylact compiled a variety of reported prophecies to add content and to demonstrate the significance of Maurice's death. Although the stories seem to lack cohesion as a group, it is their variety that is interesting for the subject of this study. If these *vaticinia ex eventu* are from disparate sources and from a variety of locations, they demonstrate the extent to which apocalyptic discourse was employed to understand Maurice's demise and the subsequent decline of the empire. We see here evidence that Maurice began to acquire heroic status shortly after his death, to such a degree that several witnesses to this phenomenon survived, preserved by Theophylact in his *Historiae*.

Michael and Mary Whitby, in a footnote to the calligrapher's vision, observe another dimension, noting that 'the miraculous announcement of a person's death could be used as proof of his saintliness', as demonstrated in a similar instance in the *Life of John the Almsgiver*.[31] This is in line with their later observation about a Syriac hagiography on the life of Maurice, which includes an account given by Theophylact in which Maurice reveals that the royal nurse had replaced a royal infant with one of her own children to preserve Maurice's line, sacrificing his dynasty in an act of virtue in the face of death.[32]

In addition to the promotion of Maurice as a venerable figure, the compilation of prophecies, dreams, and visions also has the effect of drawing attention to the abnormal nature of Phocas' ascent to power. In contrast to Maurice, who peacefully assumed the purple from Tiberius to the acclaim of the people, Phocas' coup was ominous, at times profane, and foretold disaster. Theophylact skilfully uses apocalyptic discourse, through the use of *vaticinia ex eventu* and

30 For Theophylact's sources, see Whitby 1988, 222–241.

31 Whitby and Whitby 1986, 232 n. 82.

32 Whitby and Whitby 1986, 227 n. 64.

visions, to promote the legitimacy of his patrons while undermining the legitimacy of his adversary.

3 *Sefer Zerubbabel*

While the Christian Byzantines may have seen the initial Persian conquest as divine punishment and Heraclius' ultimate victory as a cosmic restoration, Jewish Byzantine subjects saw these events as a different set of divinely ordained circumstances. The 7th century saw an increase in anti-Jewish policies, as evidenced by the increased production of anti-Jewish literature, culminating in Heraclius' controversial edict of forced baptism in 632. Several Jewish liturgical poems from the period speak of the imminent deliverance by the messiah from the oppression of Armilos, the great persecutor, and the establishment of Jewish rule, a hope spurred by Byzantine defeat in 614.[33]

This hope found its greatest expression in the *Sefer Zerubbabel*, an esoteric text construed as a vision given to the governor of Judah under the Babylonian occupation. Zerubbabel is transported to "mighty Rome", where he meets a destitute prisoner who identifies himself as the messiah, imprisoned in Rome until his appointed rise.[34] The archangels Michael and/or Metatron (the names are used interchangeably) join the two figures and present a series of *vaticinia ex eventu*, including the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the second temple by the Romans in 70 CE.[35]

The prophecies predict that the people of Israel will be brought together as one, will live in Jerusalem for five years, and offer sacrifices that are pleasing to the Lord. After this period of self-rule, Zerubbabel predicts that Siroe, the King of Persia, who corresponds to the historical Siroe, the immediate successor of Chosroes II, will attack the Jews. Ultimately, however, Siroe will die within a year and the Persian army will fall apart, both of which reflect the reality of Persian defeat at the hands of the Byzantines.[36]

At this point, Zerubbabel switches from *ex eventu* to actual prophecies. Here, the author presents the following vision:

> ויראיני שם אבן אחת שייש בדמות אשה בתולה ומראיה ותוארה נאה ויפה עד מאד לראות. ויען ויאמר אלי: אבן זאת איש ביליעל הוא. ויבא שטן וישכב עמה ויצא ממנה

33 van Bekkum 2002, 103–104.
34 *Sefer Zerubbabel* (trans. Reeves 2013, 454).
35 *Sefer Zerubbabel* (trans. Reeves 2013, 456–458).
36 *Sefer Zerubbabel* (trans. Reeves 2013, 460).

> בן ושמו ארמילוס ויחריב עם ולשון עברית. הוא ימלוך על כל וממשלתו מגעת מקצה הארץ ועד קצה הארץ, ועשר אותיות יהיו בידו ועובד עבודת אלהי נכר. ולזכר ידבר ואין מי יעמוד לפניו, וכל שאין יאמין בו ימית בחרב. ורבים ימית בהם ויבא על אנשי קדושי עליונים. ושם איתו עשרה מלכים בחיל ובכח גדול ויעשה מלחמה עם קדושים ויכל(ה) להם, ויהרוג את משיח בן יוסף הוא נחמיה בן חושיאל ושש עשרה צדיקים יהרגו עמו, ויגלו את ישראל במדבר שלש כיתות.
>
> There he showed me a marble stone in the shape of a maiden: her features and form were lovely and indeed very beautiful to behold. Then he said to me, 'This statue is the [wife] of Belial. Satan will come and have intercourse with it, and a son named Armilos will emerge from it, [whose name in Greek means] "he will destroy a nation". He will rule over all (peoples), and his dominion will extend from one end of the earth to the other, and ten letters will be in his hand. He will engage in the worship of foreign gods and speak lies. No one will be able to withstand him, and anyone who does not believe in him he will kill with the sword: many among them will he kill. He will come against the holy people of the Most High, and with him there will be ten kings wielding great power and force, and he will do battle with the holy ones. He will prevail over them and will kill the Messiah of the lineage of Joseph, Nehemiah b. Ḥushiel, and will also kill sixteen righteous ones alongside him. Then they will banish Israel to the desert in three groups.[37]

Here we see the advent of Armilos, the son of an unholy union between Satan and a beautiful marble statue, which some suggest represents an icon of the Virgin Mary.[38] Armilos will rise up and bring misery upon the Jews, expelling them into the desert and slaying the present messiah. This corresponds closely to Heraclius' expulsion of the Jews from Jerusalem upon his re-conquest, as well as his general anti-Jewish policy, culminating in the edict of forced baptism. Scholars such as Hagith Sivan and John C. Reeves have suggested that the messiah killed by Armilos may have been a Jewish community leader during the Persian occupation and brief Jewish self-governance, corresponding to a figure mentioned in a seventh-century *piyyut* (liturgical poem), though in that account blame is placed upon the Persians.[39] Zerubbabel despairs, but is comforted when it is revealed that the despicable man of the vision will rise

37 *Sefer Zerubbabel* (Yassif 2001, 430; trans. Reeves 2013, 460–461).

38 Reeves 2013, 461, no. 144.

39 Reeves 2013, no. 148; Sivan 2000, 288–291.

up in glory, reveal himself as messiah, and divine wonders will herald God's deliverance.

The *Sefer Zerubbabel* serves as an important witness to the resistance of the Byzantine Jewish community, whose situation had declined dramatically in the final decades of Heraclius' reign. Unable to speak out publicly against the regime, the author could express the community's frustrations through apocalyptic discourse. Moreover, by using an ancient biblical hero, the author could provide a sense of hope that their current troubles were already known, and that deliverance would eventually come through the arrival of the messiah.

Here, as with *Theophylact*, we see the use of visions, *vaticinia ex eventu*, and unfulfilled prophecy to promote the author's polity, though the authors' intentions are diametrically opposed. The anonymous author of the *Sefer Zerubbabel* seeks to delegitimise the Heraclian dynasty while promoting the Byzantine Jewish community. Although each document differs significantly, being composed in different languages by different communities, they represent the pervasive use of apocalyptic discourse by subjects under Byzantine hegemony.

4 *Relatio Motionis*

Let us now turn our attention to our third and final example, a curious episode recorded in the *Relatio Motionis*, the preserved record of the 655 trial of Maximus the Confessor in Constantinople.[40] Maximus appeared in Constantinople to stand trial for treason on several charges. The one most relevant to our study is the accusation that Maximus supported the abortive coup attempt by Gregory the Patrician, the exarch of North Africa, against Constans II, in 647. The author recalls an exchange in which a certain Sergius Magoudas was called forth to testify that Maximus had a dream in which angels in the East and the West were proclaiming their support for Constans II or the exarch Gregory respectively. According to the testimony:

> καὶ οἱ μὲν εἰς ἀνατολὰς ἔκραζον· Κωνσταντῖνε Αὔγουστε, τοῦ βίγκας· οἱ δὲ εἰς δυσμὰς ἐβόων· Γρηγόριε Αὔγουστε, τοῦ βίγκας· καὶ ὑπερήχησεν ἡ φωνὴ τῶν εἰς δυσμάς, τὴν τῶν εἰς ἀνατολὴν φωνήν.[41]

40 On the authorship and transmission of the *Relatio Motionis*, see Allen and Neil 2002, 35–36.

41 "And the angels in the East shouted: 'Constantine Augustus, you shall conquer!' whereas the angels in the West exclaimed: 'Gregory Augustus, you shall conquer!' And the voices of

As Bronwen Neil notes, Maximus' defence is based upon his own teaching that dreams are involuntary, and therefore the dreamer himself is not culpable for their content.[42] He cannot firmly refute that the dream occurred but, even if it had, due to the involuntary nature of dreams he would be innocent. Maximus would be in a similar situation to Godwin and the anonymous calligrapher.

In some ways, whether Maximus had such a dream, or it was a false accusation levelled in a kangaroo court is largely irrelevant for our purposes. Regardless of the historicity of the dream, to Maximus' accusers, the accusation was entirely plausible, and Maximus, rather than dismissing the accusation as preposterous, saw the need to offer a defence based on the culpability of dreamers rather than the veracity of the account. This accusation is witness to the fact that dreams, especially if received by a spiritual authority, could be considered to provide a window onto God's providence. This belief was strong enough that the mere rumour of such a dream and the communication of the dream could be levelled as a treasonous offence, one which required a reasonable defence. If true, Maximus would have been using a dream to bolster the legitimacy of his patron Gregory, a man who supported him during his time in North Africa and presided over his disputation with the Patriarch Pyrrhus.

Here we see an interesting example of a dream in apocalyptic discourse, where it was an accusation to be rejected rather than a witness to divinely ordained circumstances. The dream, if true, would be read as a prophecy and used to delegitimise the Heraclian dynasty while promoting Maximus' established patron. Again, the reality of the dream is irrelevant to our purposes. The ability to plausibly appeal to a dream as evidence in a trial demonstrates that apocalyptic discourse was employed in such circumstances with enough frequency to be considered a plausible offence.

5 Conclusion

The 7th century was a perilous time to be a Byzantine emperor. Political instability resulted in numerous *coups d'état*, and several more abortive attempts. Such instability brought with it crises of legitimacy. Emperors and their partisans attempted to demonstrate their rightful place as God's chosen regent on earth. Byzantine authors employed apocalyptic discourse, in particular,

those in the West prevailed over those in the East." *Relatio Motionis* 2 (Allen and Neil 2002, 50; trans. Allen and Neil 2002, 51).

42 Neil forthcoming.

prophecies, dreams and visions, as a way to legitimise their patrons and delegitimise their opponents.

Traditional generic approaches employed by scholars to the study of apocalypticism prevent us from observing the extensive nature of apocalyptic discourse, particularly in the 7th century. The discursive approach advocated in this chapter opens new avenues of exploration, and reveals that Byzantines, both Christians and Jews, believed that supernatural revelation provided individuals with unique insight into God's plan for the Byzantines. Such individuals included not only holy ascetics, but involuntary lay people. The pervasive use of this discourse throughout the 7th century is found in Theophylact's ploy to delegitimise Phocas, in the apocalyptic resistance provided by the *Sefer Zerubbabel*, and in the plausible accusations levelled in the trial of Maximus the Confessor.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

George of Pisidia (1959) *Heracliad*, ed. E. Pertusi, *Giorgio di Pisidia, Poemi: I. Panegirici epici* (Ettal), 225–230, 276–292.

Maximus the Confessor (1937) *Epistula* 8 (ending), ed. R. Devreesse, 'La fin inédite d'une lettre de saint Maxime: un baptéme forcé de Juifs et de Samaritains à Carthage en 632', *Revue des sciences religieuses* 17, 25–35.

Maximus the Confessor (2002) *Relatio Motionis*, ed. and trans. P. Allen and B. Neil, *Maximus the Confessor and His Companions: Documents from Exile* (Oxford), 48–74.

Sefer Zerubbabel (2001) *Sefer ha-Zikronot hu' Divrey ha-Yamim le-Yerahme'el*, ed. E. Yassif (Tel Aviv), 427–435.

Sefer Zerubbabel (2013) Trans. J. C. Reeves, 'Sefer Zerubbabel: The Prophetic Vision of Zerubbabel ben Shealtiel', in R. Bauckham, J. R. Davila, and A. Panayotov (eds), *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: More Noncanonical Scriptures, Volume 1* (Grand Rapids, MI), 448–466.

Theophylact Simocatta (1972) *Historiae*, ed. C. de Boor (Leipzig, 1887); 2nd edn P. Wirth (Stuttgart).

Theophylact Simocatta (1986) *The History of Theophylact Simocatta*, trans. M. Whitby and M. Whitby, Oxford University Press (Oxford).

Secondary Sources

Alexander, P. J. (1968) 'Medieval Apocalypses as Historical Sources', *The American Historical Review* 73/4, 997–1018.

Alexander, P. J. (1985) *The Byzantine Apocalyptic Tradition* (Berkeley and Los Angeles).

Angelidi, C. and Calofonos, G. T. (eds) (2014) *Dreaming in Byzantium and Beyond* (Farnham and Burlington, VT).

Brandes, W. (1990) 'Die apokalyptische Literatur', in F. Winkelmann and W. Brandes (eds) *Quellen zur Geschichte des frühen Byzanz (4.-9. Jahrhundert): Bestand und Probleme* (Amsterdam), 305–322.

Collins, A. Y. (2011) 'Apocalypse Now: The State of Apocalyptic Studies Near the End of the First Decade of the Twenty-First Century', *Harvard Theological Review* 104, 447–457.

Collins, J. J. (1979) 'Introduction: Towards the Morphology of a Genre', *Semeia* 14, 1–20.

Collins, J. J. (1999) *The Apocalyptic Imagination* (Grand Rapids, MI).

Collins, J. J. (2014) 'What is Apocalyptic Literature?', in J. J. Collins (ed.) *The Oxford Handbook of Apocalyptic Literature* (New York), 1–12.

Haldon, J. (1990) *Byzantium in the Seventh Century: The Transformation of a Culture* (Cambridge).

Hanson, P. D. (1979) *The Dawn of Apocalyptic: The Historical and Sociological Roots of Jewish Apocalyptic Eschatology* (Philadelphia).

Ivanov, S. A. (2006) *Holy Fools in Byzantium and Beyond* (Oxford).

Kraft, A. (2012) 'The Last Emperor *Topos* in the Byzantine Apocalyptic Tradition', *Byzantion* 82, 213–257.

Magdalino, P. (1993) 'The History of the Future and Its Uses: Prophecy, Policy and Propaganda', in R. Beaton and C. Roueché (eds) *The Making of Byzantine History: Studies Dedicated to Donald M. Nichol* (Brookfield), 3–34.

Magdalino, P. (2014) 'The Historiography of Dreaming in Medieval Byzantium', in Angelidi and Calofonos 2014, 125–144.

McGinn, B. (1979) *Visions of the End: Apocalyptic Traditions in the Middle Ages* (New York).

Neil, B. (2016) 'Studing Dream Interpretation from Early Christianity to the Rise of Islam', *Journal of Religious History* 40.1: 44–64.

Neil, B. (forthcoming) 'Pagan and Christian Dream Theory in Maximus the Confessor', in K. Parry (ed.), *Eastern Christianity and Late Antique Philosophy*, Texts and Studies in Eastern Christianity (Leiden).

Olster, D. M. (1994) *Roman Defeat, Christian Response and the Literary Construction of the Jew* (Philadelphia).

Olster, D. M. (2003) 'Byzantine Apocalypses', in B. McGinn, J. J. Collins, and S. J. Stein (eds) *The Continuum History of Apocalypticism* (New York), 254–272.

Podskalsky, G. (1972) *Byzantinische Reichseschatologie. Die Periodisierung der Weltgeschichte in der Grossreichen (Daniel 2 und 7) und dem tausendjährigen Friedensreiche (Apok. 20)* (Munich).

Reinink, G. J. (1982) 'Ismael, der Wildesel in der Wüste. Zur Typologie der Apokalypse des Pseudo-Methodios', *BZ* 75/2, 336–344.

Reinink, G. J. (1992) 'Ps.-Methodius: A Concept of History in Response to the Rise of Islam', in A. Cameron and L. I. Conrad (eds) *The Byzantine and Early Near East: Problems in the Literary Source Material* (Princeton), 149–187.

Reinink, G. J. (1996) 'Pseudo-Methodius and the Pseudo-Ephremian "Sermo de Fine Mundi"', in R. I. A. Nip et al. (eds) *Media Latinitas. A Collection of Essays to Mark the Occasion of the Retirement of L. J. Engels* (Turnhout), 317–321.

Reinink, G. J. and Stolte, B. H. (eds) (2002) *The Reign of Heraclius (610–641): Crisis and Confrontation* (Leuven).

Sim, D. C. (1996) *Apocalyptic Eschatology in the Gospel of Matthew* (Cambridge).

Sim, D. C. (2012) 'Coping with the Present by Inventing the Future: Jewish Apocalyptic Texts as Crisis Management Literature', in D. C. Sim and P. Allen (eds) *Ancient Jewish and Christian Texts as Crisis Management Literature* (London), 29–45.

Sivan, H. (2000) 'From Byzantine to Persian Jerusalem: Jewish Perspectives and Jewish/Christian Polemics', *GRBS* 41, 277–306.

Stoyanov, Y. (2011) *Defenders and Enemies of the True Cross: Sassanian Conquest of Jerusalem in 614 and Byzantine Ideology of Anti-Persian Warfare* (Vienna).

Strickler, R. W. (2016) 'The Wolves of Arabia: A Reconsideration of Maximus the Confessor's *Epistula* 8', *Byzantion* 86, 419–439.

van Bekkum W. J. (2002) 'Jewish Messianic Expectations in the Age of Heraclius', in Reinink and Stolte 2002, 95–112.

Whitby, M. (1988) *The Emperor Maurice and His Historian: Theophylact Simocatta on Persian and Balkan Warfare* (Oxford).

CHAPTER 7

Desire, Dreams, and Visions in the Letters of Emperor Konstantinos VII Porphyrogennetos and Theodoros of Kyzikos

Mark Masterson

This chapter discusses homoerotics visible in letters that passed between Emperor Konstantinos VII Porphyrogennetos and Theodoros of Kyzikos.[1] Scholars have shied away from analysing these letters on this basis.[2] The reason for their reluctance to discuss desire has been associated with a prevailing idea, which I wish to challenge, that the language of same-sex desire in Byzantine epistolography is best regarded as an indicator of the correspondent's level of education and/or a strong metaphor for friendship. Scholars also explain homoerotic warmth as a generic feature of Byzantine epistolography and, since its appearance is driven by generic expectations, they judge this warmth as not particularly referential, beyond asserting that the letter is a letter. While there is something to these positions, I do not think that we should evacuate the surface meanings of desire from the language in these letters. The homoerotic language is not solely performative, that is, meant only to demonstrate a level of education or the genre, nor is it solely metaphorical, that is, meant to indicate the strength of a friendship. Konstantinos and Theodoros speak of their desire for one another too much and in too many ways for it to be dismissed as only performative and/or metaphorical. Same-sex desire appears in both dreams and waking visions in the third and fourth letters in the collection, the first from Konstantinos, and the other an answer from Theodoros. These letters not only speak often of desire, they manipulate its phenomenology. These letters also contain language that calls male-male same-sex sexual activity to mind, including, in Konstantinos' letter (discussed below), a metaphor of rose

1 Tziatzi-Papagianni 2012 (B1–18), 83–108; Darrouzès 1960, 317–332. (All translations in this essay are my own. I thank Derek Krueger for his advice, Eva Anagnostou-Laoutides and Bronwen Neil for their patience, and Christabel Marshall for her help.)

2 While it has been the case that the homoeroticism has not been given much play in the scholarship on these letters, their remarkable nature has had a way of pushing hard on reluctance. For example, Demosthenous 2004, 175, while being opposed to seeing same-sex desire in the context of Byzantine men's friendships, wonders whether desire is present in these letters. He refers to and echoes a similar comment by Angelidi 2002, 228 n. 28.

© KONINKLIJKE BRILL NV, LEIDEN, 2018 | DOI:10.1163/9789004375710_009

and thorns whose bodily correlate is anal eroticism.[3] While we cannot know what sexual acts, if any, occurred between these two men, these letters suggest a level of comfort with same-sex desire in Byzantine circles that we should bear in mind when we form opinions about elite male culture in the medieval empire.

Before proceeding, a word about this corpus of letters is in order. The eighteen letters that survive from the correspondence between Konstantinos and Theodoros are precious. The letters, in sequence, answer one another. It is not common to have a conversation documented like this. Based on internal evidence (mention of a Russian incursion[4] and general anxiety around rulership, which suggests that Romanos I Lekapenos, who was lead emperor through much of Konstantinos' youth, was still around or Konstantinos was but freshly in charge[5]), scholars have generally thought the letters date from the 940s.[6]

1 Byzantine Epistolography and Same-Sex Desire

Byzantine epistolography[7] often features homoerotic language.[8] A frequent approach in the scholarship has been to drain the language of much significance, denying that expressions of same-sex desire in the letters could refer to actual desire between men. Non-articulated appeals to assumed heterosexuality and more overt ones to religious morality and law have seemingly sufficed to tamp down most thought about possible referentiality of this language to actual desire. Messis has the following to say, and these words are representative of

3 Tziatzi-Papagianni 2012, 87.

4 Konstantinos, *Letter 5* (Tziatzi-Papagianni 2012, 90–91).

5 In *Letter 4*, Theodoros has a dream, discussed below, that may allegorise anxiety about palace politics (Tziatzi-Papagianni 2012, 89).

6 Tziatzi-Papagianni 2012, *4.

7 For remarks on the epistolographic genre, Byzantine expectations of letters, and the contexts of their writing and first readings, see Mullett 1997, 11–43.

8 Over the years, scholars have noted the erotic/friendly language in Byzantine epistolography (e.g., Karlsson 1962, 21–23, 58–78; Grünbart 2005, 113–122; Mullett 1999; Patlagean 1985, 603–605; Schneider 2008; Tomadakis 1993, 116–118). The general trend has been to interpret the language of same-sex desire as a performative and semantically inert convention of the genre, e.g., Messis 2006, 823; 2008, 33–34 and Demosthenous 2004, 173–175. That said, there has been some tentative resistance to this position on the erotic language in the letters. Mullett 1999, 20–21, e.g., believes it is worth thinking carefully in terms of referentiality to actual desire (cf. Schneider 2008, 95). Odorico 1995 also challenges this general approach to same-sex desire in Byzantine epistolography with an audacious reading of Theodoros Daphnopates' seventeenth letter.

the predominant trend in approaching representations of same-sex desire in Byzantine epistolography:

> La correspondance de l'empereur Constantin VII Porphyrogénète avec le métropolite de Cyzique Théodore est pleine non plus d'allusions, mais des expressions ouvertement érotiques. Ce fait a incité nombre de savants modernes à parler soit des vrais rapports érotiques entre les personnes qui correspondent, soit d'une sorte de littérature homoérotique. Mais la réalité semble être tout autre. Ces textes 'officials', préparés pour une circulation publique dans une société dont le conformisme chrétien ne permet pas l'expression de sentiments érotiques hétérosexuels, beaucoup plus homosexuels, constituent le plus souvent de purs jeux littéraires, un champs où chacun montre son éducation et sa finesse d'espirit. Dans ces textes, le vocabulaire érotique appartient à la catégorie du vocabulaire concernant l'*eros* 'celeste', un *eros* complètement désexualisé, et s'assimile seulement en apparence au vocabulaire de *paidika*, selon l'expression de Synèse de Cyrène. Ce vocabulaire est utilisé pour, rhétoriquement, marquer l'intensité du rapport amical.[9]

Messis offers several arguments against perceiving same-sex desire in these letters, all of which deserve question. First he speaks of the circulation of the letters precluding the presentation of same-sex desire as, presumably, actual desire would have been shameful to depict. But he asserts this is the case rather than shows it. Second, since Byzantine circles did not countenance the depiction of heterosexual desire, *a fortiori* representation of same-sex desire was even less likely. As we will see below, ample depiction of same-sex desire in these letters makes his idea of a taboo on representation precarious. Seemingly aware of this, Messis insists either that the language is purely performative, demonstrating education and/or a cultivated temperament, or that it is a sexy metaphor for heavenly incorporeal love. It is not controversial to me that this language is performative at least some of the time. In the matter of heavenly love, there is support here and there for this when God is referred to.[10] But a

9 Messis 2006, 823.

10 E.g., in *Letter 4*, Theodoros writes the following: "May it happen that we be filled with your true intercourse and conversation, O God and Lord who converts everything to a better state." Ἡμᾶς δὲ εἴη τῆς ἀληθοῦς ἐμφορηθῆναι συνουσίας καὶ ὁμιλίας σου, ὦ Θεὲ καὶ Κύριε, ὁ πάντα μετασκευάζων ἐπὶ τὸ βέλτιον. (Tziatzi-Papagianni 2012, 89).

detailed reading of the letters of Konstantinos and Theodoros shows that the predominant register of their language of desire is corporeal and not celestial.[11]

A softened version of this approach to desire in the letters perhaps is understandable, if ultimately not persuasive, if we think in terms of the long history of the genre that stretches back into late antiquity and earlier than that. Many of the letters from the fourth-century fathers, for example, feature warm language that uses tropes of desire.[12] Still, I think we need to push back on the notion that, say, Basil the Great or Synesios is an optimal guide for understanding tenth-century epistolography. Indeed, viewing later Byzantine writers as unreflectively continuing with earlier modes is a desiccated approach to a practice that shows variation in later times. The letters of Nikolaos Mystikos, for example, do not have nearly the array of erotic language that the letters of Theodoros and Konstantinos have.[13] But besides that, we should consider the letters within their later context. The empire of the 900s was different from that of the 300s or 400s. And the situation around same-sex desire was different also. The strength of negative reactions to desire between men was not as strong as it had been.[14]

2 Konstantinos VII Porphyrogennetos and Theodoros of Kyzikos

Proclaimed emperor while still a boy in 913, Konstantinos was emperor until his death in 959. That said, Romanos I Lekapenos consigned Konstantinos to

11 Elsewhere, and again in the context of discussing the letters of Konstantinos and Theodoros, Messis insists on his sure knowledge of Byzantine authorial intentions, of anticipated medieval receptions of these letters, and on what constitutes proper interpretive practice now: "Voir dans ces lettres l'expression d'un réel amour ou, pire encore, les prémisses d'une littérature homoérotique, signifie que nous ne savons pas lire les textes à la manière que les Byzantins les écrivaient et les lisaient." (Messis 2008, 34; cf. Demosthenous 2004, 173–175 for similar sentiments). I believe that these letters possess greater semantic richness than this.

12 Though no friend to same-sex desire, Basil the Great nonetheless uses warm language in his letters. See, e.g., Messis 2006, 823; Tomadakis 1993, 117.

13 Nikolaos Mystikos, *Letters* (Jenkins and Westerink 1973).

14 Space will not permit a discussion of this important issue. Suffice it to say that Byzantium in the 900s does not display much concern with same-sex sexual activity. Laiou (1992, 78) remarks that same-sex sexual behavior in Byzantium, which was forbidden in civil law, seemingly was not worth attention unless it caused a scandal: "Il est possible que, en dépit de tout son zèle normatif pour prohiber les actes homosexuels, la société byzantine les ait en fait tolérés tant qu'ils ne faisaient pas scandale." For more on this relative lack of concern, see Messis 2006, 779 n. 170, 781; Mullett 1988, 11 n. 41; Pitsakis 2008, 9; Smythe 1999. Also see Masterson forthcoming-a and forthcoming-b.

the sidelines in 920, taking over as lead emperor until 944. This meant that Konstantinos, denied political power, seemingly had time to develop his intellectual interests. Once he was sole emperor and probably before that, he superintended important intellectual projects. He guided the writing of the immense encyclopaedia, the *Souda*. He commissioned Histories,[15] the *De Ceremoniis* (the invaluable guide to imperial ceremonial), the *Excerpta de Sententiis* (a massive project of excerpting earlier literature), and much else besides.[16] Konstantinos was a leading figure in an intensely intellectual milieu that lasted for decades.

Another thing to note about this milieu is that Konstantinos Kephalas (probably around 900, though perhaps a little earlier) compiled the *Greek Anthology*.[17] This collection of epigrams, many of which are sexual in nature (especially in books 5 and 12), is quoted often in the *Souda* and was surely well known in these circles. The *Greek Anthology* arguably is present in the letters of Konstantinos and Theodoros. Intertextuality with the *Greek Anthology*, as with intertextuality with scripture, is one of the ways Konstantinos and Theodoros communicate with each other. These quotations are not just inert displays of education, on the one hand, and piety on the other. These recollections and quotations of earlier written productions recall passages and/or scenarios in the source texts. A homoerotic interpretation of these letters and their context explores this semantic richness.

We don't know much about our other correspondent, Theodoros of Kyzikos. He was a churchman whose star ascended so long as Konstantinos was emperor. Later, he seems to have run afoul of the new regime that came to power after the death of Konstantinos' son, Romanos II, in 963. He was exiled that year, and we hear nothing more of him after 965.[18] Like Konstantinos, he clearly had attained a high degree of education.

3 Dreams and Visions in the *Souda*

As noted above, dreams and waking visions enliven the two letters to be discussed below, and they provide phenomenologically varied ways for

15 There was the *Basileiai*, written by Ioseph Genesios, and the anonymous *Vita Basilii* and *Theophanes Continuatus*, both perhaps written by Theodoros Daphnopates (Treadgold 2013, 178).

16 See Treadgold's discussion (2013, 156–167) of the hub of intellectual activity that was Konstantinos' court. See also Lemerle 1986, 309–353.

17 Lemerle 1986, 310; Cameron 1986, 292.

18 See Tziatzi-Papagianni 2012, *3–16, for a sketch of Theodoros' life.

Konstantinos and Theodoros to present their desire for one another. It is of interest that Konstantinos' own encyclopaedia, the *Souda*, worked to define both dreams and waking visions. A look at the *Souda*'s entries on the "dream" (Ὄνειρον) and "waking vision" (Ὕπαρ) underscores the significance of their appearance in the letters. The prevailing distinction between visions that should be kept in mind is whether one is asleep and dreaming, or one is awake and experiencing a waking vision. First, then, the "dream" (ὄνειρον).

The *Souda* defines the "dream" (ὄνειρον) in relation to the "vision-in-sleep" (ἐνύπνιον).[19] The entry itself is confused, that is, a quotation from Homer at the end of the entry contradicts the definition being developed. Nevertheless, it is safe enough to say that the difference between dreams and visions-in-sleep is that dreams have a pronounced connection to reality and predict what will be:

> Ὄνειρον ἐνυπνίου διαφέρει: ἕτερον γάρ ἐστι καὶ οὐ ταὐτό. ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ ὄνειρον καὶ ἐνύπνιον καλῶς εἴποι τις ἄν: ὅταν δὲ τεχνικῶς λέγῃ τις, κυρίως ἕκαστον χρὴ καλεῖν, καὶ τὸ μὲν ἀσήμαντον καὶ οὐδενὸς προαγορευτικόν, ἀλλ' ἐν μόνῳ τῷ ὕπνῳ τὴν δύναμιν ἔχον, γινόμενον δὲ ἐξ ἐπιθυμίας ἀλόγου ἢ ὑπερβάλλοντος φόβου ἢ πλησμονῆς ἢ ἐνδείας, ἐνύπνιον χρὴ καλεῖν, τὸ δὲ μετὰ τὸν ὕπνον ἐνέργεια ὂν καὶ ἀποβησόμενόν ἐστιν ἀγαθὸν ἢ κακὸν ὄνειρον. πολλάκις δὲ καταχρηστέον τοῖς ὀνόμασιν, ὡς καὶ Ὅμηρος: 'θεῖός μοι ἐνύπνιον ἦλθεν ὄνειρος.'[20]
>
> A dream differs from a vision-in-sleep. It is something else and not the same. But someone can say not objectionably that a dream is a vision-in-sleep. But whenever someone speaks with skilful precision, it is necessary to use each word in its proper sense, and the one meaningless and not foretelling anything, having its power during sleep alone, and coming into being because of an irrational desire or an overarching fear or satiety or poverty: this one it is necessary to call a vision-in-sleep. With respect to a good or bad dream there is effectivity in reality or soon to eventuate. Often [*sc*. both of the] nouns must be used, just as Homer [says]: "a divine dream came to me as a vision-in-sleep."

The dream addresses reality and has predictive power ('effectivity in reality or soon to eventuate'), whereas the vision-in-sleep comes from something irrational in the mind or from the way the body is feeling, and therefore has, according to the *Souda*, no address to reality. It is debatable of course whether

19 Greek features three nouns that mean 'dreams', ὄναρ, ὄνειρον, and ὄνειρος, with no appreciable difference in meaning between them.

20 *Souda*, Omicron 345 (Ὄνειρον); Homer, *Iliad* 2.56; *Odyssey* 14.495.

a dream driven by, say, the reality of one's own indigestion is not somehow connected to reality. But rather than question too exactingly, it is best to accept the distinction and allow mental or somatic solipsism to define the vision-in-sleep. The quotation from Homer is interesting here. As the vision-in-sleep (ἐνύπνιον) plays in the mind while one is asleep, a dream (ὄνειρος) can appear within this envelope, as it were.

The other type of vision is one we have while we are awake: the "waking vision" (ὕπαρ). Here is the *Souda*'s entry for the waking vision:

> Ὕπαρ: ἀλήθεια, οὐκ ἐν ὀνείρῳ. τὸ μεθ' ἡμέραν ὄναρ. οἷον φανερῶς, ἀληθῶς ὑπάρχον. "ἐμοὶ διηγοῦ σὺ τοὐμὸν ὄναρ: ἐγὼ δ' ἔοικα [σοὶ] τὸ σὸν ὕπαρ ἀφηγεῖσθαι." Ὕπαρ λέγει τὸ μεθ' ἡμέραν ὄναρ: ὡς ἐναργῶς ὑπάρχον, ἀληθές. κατὰ ἀποκοπὴν τῆς τελευταίας συλλαβῆς τῆς χον.[21]
>
> A waking vision is truth and not [a vision] in a dream; a dream during the day. [A waking vision] is existent obviously and truly. 'You tell me my dream and I seem to relate [to you] your waking vision' [writes Emperor Julian.][22] A waking vision designates a dream during the day as evidently existent, a true thing; [also] according to the removal of the final syllable, the χον.[23]

The waking vision (ὕπαρ) is distinct from the dream (ὄνειρον), and especially from the vision-in-sleep (ἐνύπνιον). It has a closer relationship to reality, as it is ἀλήθεια or truth. The entry strengthens the point about truth through asserting that the word for waking vision, ὕπαρ, is an abbreviation of ὑπάρχον, which means "a thing existing." The waking vision also happens during the day while one is awake. As a daytime envisioning, it has, on this basis, an attachment to things that are real: consciousness establishes credibility. Still though, a tension is present in this word, and, as above with the dream, it is best not to try to resolve it. It is a tension between, on the one hand, the reality of envisioning things while awake, that is, the fact of consciousness, and, on the other hand, an oblique connection the waking vision has to things that are real, which tends to be more occult and even supernatural. With his characteristically odd acuity, Emperor Julian highlights this tension: magically and from a distance he tells Ekdikios, the letter recipient, what the truth is.

---

21 *Souda*, Upsilon 155 (Ὕπαρ).

22 Emperor Julian, *Ep*. 108 (Bidez 2004, 186).

23 To whit, ὑπάρχον ("a thing existing") has become ὕπαρ.

A brief excerpt from *Theophanes Continuatus*, an anonymous history in four books further substantiates these assertions about the waking vision. Written most probably in the 950s at the direction of Konstantinos,[24] this history narrates happenings in the 9th century. The account of the reign of Michael III (842–867) includes a dream that Bardas, Michael's uncle, had. A leading political figure because of the power vacuum created by Michael's youth, Bardas had a dream in which he was cut to pieces. The dream also told him that Michael was doomed. The dream prefigured Bardas' brutal assassination in 866 by dismemberment at the hands of the soon to be emperor, Basileios I.[25] After concluding his narration of Bardas' dream, the author remarks as follows: "and thus the dream [of Bardas] came to pass, and on account of this it is [in my estimation] a waking vision (ὕπαρ) and not a dream."[26] The vision that came to Bardas in a dream, on account of its perfect predicative power, qualifies as a waking vision. With these distinctions between the dream and waking vision in mind, I will now focus on desire, dreams, and waking-visions in two letters by Konstantinos and Theodoros.

4 Konstantinos' *Letter 3*

Konstantinos voices desire for Theodoros often in *Letter 3*.[27] He extends discussion of it by presenting it in both a dream and a waking vision. There is much to say about this letter. First, Konstantinos affects rusticity with the evident aim of lowering Theodoros' expectations for the letter. The letter then gains homoerotic warmth as it proceeds. He speaks of Theodoros' gift of summer fruit and wine, likening them to a kiss from his lips. He expands on the emotion, feeling filled up and gladdened: "and as though, according to what has been written, gladdened."[28] "Gladdened" is meant to be read intertextually, as Konstantinos signals this by saying "according to what has been written." As Tziatzi-Papagianni suggests,[29] a probable intertext is a portion of Psalm 103, a psalm which enumerates many of the benefits that God brings to the world:

24 Treadgold 2013, 165.

25 Calofonos 2014, 108–110, discusses this grim assassination and the dream associated with it.

26 *Theophanes Continuatus* 4.40/204 (Featherstone and Signes-Codoñer 2015, 290): καὶ ὁ μὲν ὄνειρος οὕτω δὴ ἐτελεύτα· ὃ δὲ ὕπαρ ἀλλ' οὐκ ὄναρ ἐστίν.

27 *Letter 3*, Konstantinos to Theodoros (Tziatzi-Papagianni 2012, 87–88), is printed and translated in its entirety in the Appendix.

28 Tziatzi-Papagianni 2012, 87: καὶ οἱονεὶ κατὰ τὸ γεγραμμένον εὐφρανθέντες.

29 Tziatzi-Papagianni 2012, 87.

> … ἐξανατέλλων χόρτον τοῖς κτήνεσιν καὶ χλόην τῇ δουλείᾳ τῶν ἀνθρώπων τοῦ ἐξαγαγεῖν ἄρτον ἐκ τῆς γῆς· καὶ οἶνος εὐφραίνει καρδίαν ἀνθρώπου τοῦ ἱλαρῦναι πρόσωπον ἐν ἐλαίῳ, καὶ ἄρτος καρδίαν ἀνθρώπου στηρίζει. χορτασθήσεται τὰ ξύλα τοῦ πεδίου, αἱ κέδροι τοῦ Λιβάνου, ἃς ἐφύτευσεν …[30]
>
> … raising up grass for the cattle and the shoots for the slavery of men to bring forth bread from the earth. Wine gladdens the heart of a man to make the face shine with oil, and bread makes the heart of man strong. The trees of the plain will be made to grow lushly, the cedars of Lebanon which he planted.

The word the letter tells us to read intertextually is "gladdened" (εὐφρανθέντες), and it finds its correlate in "gladdens" (εὐφραίνει) in the psalm. A reader's recollection of this psalm leads to further reflections, for there are additional commonalities between these two texts. They have pleasant elements in common and there are also accompanying items that qualify pleasure: things in the psalm and the letter come with a catch. We find heart and wine in both the psalm (οἶνος εὐφραίνει καρδίαν) and the letter (καρδίαν; οἶνον). There are also good things to eat: summer fruit in the letter and sustaining bread in the psalm. All these good things don't come free though. They have accompanying drawbacks. In the psalm it is the slavery of men (τῇ δουλείᾳ τῶν ἀνθρώπων) which accompanies the things to be enjoyed. In the letter, the wine and summer fruit are accompanied by "constriction and distress."[31] The admission of a downside then leads Konstantinos to reflect further on other instances in which something good is accompanied by something unwanted. Konstantinos provides an explanatory metaphor: that of the rose and thorn: "just as, I suppose, the thorn thrives, somehow, near the rose."[32]

Konstantinos' mention of the rose and thorn adds sexual content to his letter, placed as it is between a discussion of desire and an introduction of the terms *eromenos* (ἐρώμενος) and *erastes* (ἐραστής).[33] Within this learned discourse, drawn from the pederastic poetry found in the *Greek Anthology*, the anus of the boy was the rosebud and the thorn was the hair that would arrive to mark the end of a boy's desirability.[34] For example, in the anonymous fortieth epigram from Book 12, a young man past the age of boyish desirability wishes

30 Ps. 103: 14–16.
31 Tziatzi-Papagianni 2012, 87: θλίβον καὶ τρύχον.
32 Tziatzi-Papagianni 2012, 87: ὥσπερ, ὡς οἶμαι, τῷ ῥόδῳ πως ἀναφύεται καὶ ἡ ἄκανθα.
33 Tziatzi-Papagianni 2012, 87–88.
34 Richlin 1992, 35–36.

to be worshipped as a statue might be. But he wants to be a particular kind a statue: one whose extremities are made of marble but the rest, made of wood (probably) and covered with a cloak, is not:

> "Μὴ 'κδύσῃς, ἄνθρωπε, τὸ χλαινίον, ἀλλὰ θεώρει
> οὕτως ἀκρολίθου κἀμὲ τρόπον ξοάνου."
> γυμνὴν Ἀντιφίλου ζητῶν χάριν, ὡς ἐπ' ἀκάνθαις
> εὑρήσεις ῥοδέαν φυομένην κάλυκα.[35]
>
> "Don't take off, man, my little cloak, but look at me as if I were a god's statue with marble extremities." Seeking the naked grace of Antiphilos, you will discover his blooming rosebud, as it were, amid thorns!

Antiphilos, whose words comprise the first two lines, does not want his cloak removed, for it will reveal that he has sprouted hairs on his posterior. A work such as this epigram would occur to an educated Byzantine reader (and Theodoros was certainly one of those) not only because of the compilation and circulation of pederastic poetry at this time, but also, as noted above, because of the mention of beloved boy and lover, who appear soon in the paragraph.

Next Konstantinos writes of "the law of *eros* and of *philia* that's unbastardised, true, sweet, and lovable/erotic."[36] One could be forgiven for imagining that Konstantinos was going to expand on the notion of maturity bringing an end to desirability, given what he was just talking about. But it turns out that the primary aspect of this law about which he wishes to speak is the pain of being apart, for this is what causes "constriction and distress in [his] heart." In any case, he no sooner mentions the law than the thorns reappear, but they are not as wounding as absence. And as the thorns cannot compete with absence, neither can a new metaphor, that of the two-edged sword (ῥομφαία δίστομος): "What is more wounding than thorns, or a two-edged sword, unless it be the loss of one's *eromenos* …"[37] The two-edged sword appears in both the Septuagint[38] and in the New Testament[39] and takes us into scripture and away from pederastic literature. What is the valence of this image? Thorns and roses speak of pederasty, albeit interrupted. What does the two-edged sword say?

---

35 *Greek Anthology* 12.40.

36 Tziatzi-Papagianni 2012, 87: νόμος … ἔρωτος καὶ φιλίας ἀνοθεύτου καὶ ἀληθοῦς καὶ γλυκείας καὶ ἐρασμίας.

37 Tziatzi-Papagianni 2012, 87: Τί γὰρ ἀκάνθης ἢ ῥομφαίας διστόμου πληκτικώτερον, εἰ μὴ στέρησις ἐρωμένου….

38 In the Septuagint, ῥομφαία δίστομος appears at Ps. 149:6 and Eccles. 21:3.

39 In the New Testament, ῥομφαία δίστομος appears in Apoc. 1:16 and 2:12.

In the Septuagint, the two-edged sword appears in the Psalms and in Ecclesiasticus. In the bloodthirsty Psalm 149, the two-edged sword is a weapon of righteous aggression that holy men wield after they have praised God and taken carnal enjoyment in their bedchambers:

> … καυχήσονται ὅσιοι ἐν δόξῃ καὶ ἀγαλλιάσονται ἐπὶ τῶν κοιτῶν αὐτῶν· αἱ ὑψώσεις τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν τῷ λάρυγγι αὐτῶν, καὶ ῥομφαῖαι δίστομοι ἐν ταῖς χερσὶν αὐτῶν τοῦ ποιῆσαι ἐκδίκησιν ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν, ἐλεγμοὺς ἐν τοῖς λαοῖς, τοῦ δῆσαι τοὺς βασιλεῖς αὐτῶν ἐν πέδαις καὶ τοὺς ἐνδόξους αὐτῶν ἐν χειροπέδαις σιδηραῖς, τοῦ ποιῆσαι ἐν αὐτοῖς κρίμα ἔγγραπτον· δόξα αὕτη ἐστὶν πᾶσι τοῖς ὁσίοις αὐτοῦ.[40]
>
> … the holy men will speak loud in glory and they will rejoice in their bedchambers. The exaltations of God will be in their throats and the two-edged swords will be in their hands to bring vengeance to the nations, to refute the peoples, to bind their kings in fetters and their nobles in iron chains, to bring to them the judgement that has been written. This glory will be for all His holy men.

This weapon of the righteous men appears with nearly opposite valence in the Ecclesiasticus. Here, the two-edged sword is not a weapon wielded by the holy ones—it is among the metaphors for soul-destroying sin:

> Τέκνον, ἥμαρτες; μὴ προσθῇς μηκέτι καὶ περὶ τῶν προτέρων σου δεήθητι. ὡς ἀπὸ προσώπου ὄφεως φεῦγε ἀπὸ ἁμαρτίας· ἐὰν γὰρ προσέλθῃς, δήξεταί σε· ὀδόντες λέοντος οἱ ὀδόντες αὐτῆς ἀναιροῦντες ψυχὰς ἀνθρώπων. ὡς ῥομφαία δίστομος πᾶσα ἀνομία, τῇ πληγῇ αὐτῆς οὐκ ἔστιν ἴασις.[41]
>
> Have you sinned child? Do so no longer and ask for pardon for your previous [sins]. As from the face of a serpent, flee from sin. For if you will approach, it will bite you: its teeth are those of a lion carrying off souls of people, just as the two-edged sword is all lawlessness, there is no cure for its blow.

These two occurrences from the Septuagint show that the two-edged sword has a double valence. On the one hand it is a weapon of the carnal fathers who fight with divine sanction and, on the other, it is "all lawlessness" (πᾶσα ἀνομία)

40 Ps. 149:5–9.
41 Eccles. 21.1–3.

that will destroy a soul, similar to a savage beast or a malady for which there is no cure.

The life of the two-edged sword in scripture does not end there. It also occurs in the Apocalypse of John I and II. As is well known, this section of the New Testament claims to be a quotation of a letter that John has written to the seven churches in Asia.[42] In this letter, he relates what an angel sent by Christ told him about last things. Hearing a voice telling him to write,[43] John turns around to see the source of that voice:

> Καὶ ἐπέστρεψα βλέπειν τὴν φωνὴν ἥτις ἐλάλει μετ' ἐμοῦ· καὶ ἐπιστρέψας εἶδον ἑπτὰ λυχνίας χρυσᾶς, καὶ ἐν μέσῳ τῶν λυχνιῶν ὅμοιον υἱὸν ἀνθρώπου, ἐνδεδυμένον ποδήρη καὶ περιεζωσμένον πρὸς τοῖς μαστοῖς ζώνην χρυσᾶν· ἡ δὲ κεφαλὴ αὐτοῦ καὶ αἱ τρίχες λευκαὶ ὡς ἔριον λευκόν, ὡς χιών, καὶ οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ αὐτοῦ ὡς φλὸξ πυρός, καὶ οἱ πόδες αὐτοῦ ὅμοιοι χαλκολιβάνῳ ὡς ἐν καμίνῳ πεπυρωμένης, καὶ ἡ φωνὴ αὐτοῦ ὡς φωνὴ ὑδάτων πολλῶν, καὶ ἔχων ἐν τῇ δεξιᾷ χειρὶ αὐτοῦ ἀστέρας ἑπτά, καὶ ἐκ τοῦ στόματος αὐτοῦ ῥομφαία δίστομος ὀξεῖα ἐκπορευομένη, καὶ ἡ ὄψις αὐτοῦ ὡς ὁ ἥλιος φαίνει ἐν τῇ δυνάμει αὐτοῦ.[44]
>
> I turned to look to the voice which was speaking with me. Having turned I saw seven gold candle-stands and in the midst of candle-stands one like the son of man, clothed to his feet and wearing a gold sash across his breast. His head and hair are white as wool is white, as snow is white, and his eyes are as the fire's flame. His feet are like brass, as though in the furnace of the glowing [flame], and his voice is like the voice of many waters. He is holding in his right hand seven stars, and from his mouth a sharp two-edged sword is jutting out. The appearance of him shines as the sun does in its power.

Here the two-edged sword juts out from the mouth. It is a difficult image, but surely gestures in the direction of language that is aggressive. The words out of the mouth of the "one like the son of man" will be violent and punishing. The partly metaphorical nature of the sword discernible in Ecclesiasticus ("all lawlessness"/πᾶσα ἀνομία) has been realized here, as the sword is as metaphorical as can be at this point in the text.

In the next section of the Apocalypse the two-edged sword appears again. There are further directions for John:

---

42 Apoc. 1:4.

43 Apoc. 1:10–11.

44 Apoc. 1:12–16.

> Καὶ τῷ ἀγγέλῳ τῆς ἐν Περγάμῳ ἐκκλησίας γράψον· Τάδε λέγει ὁ ἔχων τὴν ῥομφαίαν τὴν δίστομον τὴν ὀξεῖαν· Οἶδα ποῦ κατοικεῖς, ὅπου ὁ θρόνος τοῦ Σατανᾶ, καὶ κρατεῖς τὸ ὄνομά μου, καὶ οὐκ ἠρνήσω τὴν πίστιν μου καὶ ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις Ἀντιπᾶς ὁ μάρτυς μου ὁ πιστός μου, ὃς ἀπεκτάνθη παρ' ὑμῖν, ὅπου ὁ Σατανᾶς κατοικεῖ. ἀλλ' ἔχω κατὰ σοῦ ὀλίγα, ὅτι ἔχεις ἐκεῖ κρατοῦντας τὴν διδαχὴν Βαλαάμ, ὃς ἐδίδασκεν τῷ Βαλὰκ βαλεῖν σκάνδαλον ἐνώπιον τῶν υἱῶν Ἰσραήλ, φαγεῖν εἰδωλόθυτα καὶ πορνεῦσαι· οὕτως ἔχεις καὶ σὺ κρατοῦντας τὴν διδαχὴν Νικολαϊτῶν ὁμοίως. μετανόησον οὖν· εἰ δὲ μή, ἔρχομαί σοι ταχύ, καὶ πολεμήσω μετ' αὐτῶν ἐν τῇ ῥομφαίᾳ τοῦ στόματός μου.[45]
>
> And to the angel of the church in Pergamum [John, I want you to] write the following: "The one holding the sharp two-edged sword says the following: 'I know where you live, where the throne of Satan is, and you honor my name. You did not deny faith in me during the days faithful Antipas was a martyr, who was killed among you, in the place where Satan lives. But I do have some things against you. You have those who honor the teachings of Balaam, who taught Balak to pitch a snare in the face of the sons of Israel, to eat the sacrifices to the idols, and to fornicate. In the same moment you also have those honoring the teaching of the Nicolaitians. Repent therefore. If you don't, I will come for you swiftly, and I will make war on you with the sword of my mouth.'"

Here, the two-edged sword appears first as an actual weapon in the hand but at the end of the passage it is issuing from his mouth again.[46] We see a movement toward physicality and then back toward metaphor that characterised the two-edged sword in the first section of the Apocalypse. It is an instrument of physical and verbal chastisement. The sword here means to sharpen the resolve to repent of consuming sacrificial meats and fornicating (φαγεῖν εἰδωλόθυτα καὶ πορνεῦσαι), the latter of which is particularly interesting when compared with the desire-filled context of Konstantinos' letter.

When Konstantinos mentions the two-edged sword in his letter, his wields an image that, when in the Septuagint, is both an actual weapon of the carnal fathers and a metaphor for the damage that sin can do to the soul. In the New Testament, the two-edged sword is not only a physical weapon but also a metaphor for the punishing word of Christ that condemns fornication. This image from authoritative scripture brings moral and phenomenological complexity

45 Apoc. 2:12–16.

46 The adjective 'two-edged' (δίστομος) is missing in the later verse but may be presumed.

to this scene of desire in a medieval letter: carnality, chastisement of fornication, and lawlessness on one hand, and, on the other, a dichotomy between physicality and metaphoricity.

Comparison of the two-edged sword to the thorn (ἄκανθα) is revealing and appropriate, for Konstantinos presents them both as less vexatious than being apart from Theodoros is. The thorn encapsulates a limitation on desire according to the general protocols around pederasty: a hairy man is not to be desired. The threat posed by the two-edged sword to desire is more nebulous. It is certainly reasonable to imagine that the two-edged sword embodies strictures against carnal expression of desire, though it is not a simple image, on account of its life as carnal, lawless, and upholder of God's law. But Konstantinos worries less about desire improper (thorn) or illicit (sword) than he does about being apart. He does not worry about prohibition, whether it is based on age—for hair on his beloved (ἐρώμενος) will not bother him—or on religion. Rather, absence is the worst thing. Indeed, he expands on this norm-breaking position when he says the following: "I am mad but [I am mad] temperately, for friendship [as far as I am concerned] knows how to innovate in all things."[47] In their friendship, paradoxes abound. Madness is not madness. There is a law of *eros* and *philia*, according to which rulebooks are thrown out amid innovation and renegotiation. Established law is innovation and the rule is that there is no rule.

Now having broken free of constraints, Konstantinos becomes more direct and speaks of his desire as perceptible in dreams and in a waking-vision, both of which of course, as noted above in the discussion of their respective entries in the *Souda*, had a particular address to reality and truth. In the letter he remarks that dreams (ὄνειροι) often harass him as he sleeps and he rejoices when he thinks his "dearest one" has been put in his hands, that there is an opportunity for intercourse/conversation—a double-entendre: προσομιλεῖν—and kissing (καταφιλεῖν). Then he awakens and the visions that he had while asleep yield to the kind one has while awake. The illusion of presence that unconsciousness made available is no longer present for him. And he expresses dissatisfaction with being in the domain of the waking vision (ὕπαρ). A reader might expect that things will be chaster going forward. This expectation is not met when all the same things are written into the register of the waking vision; all these feelings turn out to be truth (ἀλήθεια) and a thing existing (ὑπάρχον), as it were. The waking vision, initially the chilly waters of reality, becomes an increasingly warm bath as kissing, friendly biting (δακεῖν … φιλικῶς), and satisfying desire

47 Tziatzi-Papagianni 2012, 88: μαίνομαι γάρ, ἀλλὰ σωφρόνως· οἶδε γὰρ φιλία πάντα καινοτομεῖν.

(ἵνα τῆς ἐφέσεως ἀπολαύσωμεν) become "truth and not [a vision] in a dream" (ἀλήθεια, οὐκ ἐν ὀνείρῳ), as the *Souda* would put it.[48]

In sum, a reader of this letter, who considers the presentation of Konstantinos' desire for Theodoros in it, finds Konstantinos outlining a place for desire outside of usual strictures recoverable from both earlier Greek literature and scripture. The letter concludes with a phenomenologically varied depiction of this desire, showing up both in dreams and in a waking vision. While a modern reader of this letter might be tempted to think Konstantinos' talk of dreams and visions is illusory, the *Souda* discourages such a view. Dreams and waking visions have a connection to truth and there is the fact that Konstantinos has spent much time considering his desire from a number of angles.

5 Theodoros' *Letter 4*

We are fortunate to have Theodoros' response to Konstantinos' letter (see Appendix: *Letter 4*). In his answer, Theodoros prefers the flames of desire and, more egalitarian, he does not talk of lovers (ἐρασταί) and beloveds (ἐρώμενοι), nor does he speak of thorns and roses. He thereby avoids the assymetries of pederasty which were a prominent theme in Konstantinos' letter. Theodoros focuses on Konstantinos' sweet mouth and depicts the emperor as a spring, honeyed and golden, that does not quench a fire but makes it flame higher and hotter. Also depicting his thoughts about the emperor as happening in both an unconscious dream and in conscious visions, Theodoros articulates his desire via the dream/waking vision dichotomy. He thinks of Konstantinos during the day. Konstantinos also appears to Theodoros in a dream in which a running or horse-back riding Konstantinos is being pursued. His dream is not as erotic as Konstantinos'. The running, perhaps a race, with overtones of political allegory, does not seem sexy. But the admiring lead-in, which features Theodoros' delight in Konstantinos' smile, perhaps is. There also might be a double-entendre with "stood" when he says, "during the night you, a dream, stood at my right."[49]

The verb in question παρέστηκας is intransitive in this form and can refer to an erection, as resort to the *Greek Anthology* shows. In Epigram 232 from Book 12, in a poem by Skythinos, an impatient narrator addresses his erect penis:

> Ὀρθὸν νῦν ἔστηκας, ἀνώνυμον, οὐδὲ μαραίνῃ,
> ἐντέτασαι δ' ὡς ἂν μήποτε παυσόμενον·

48 *Souda*, Upsilon 155: Ὕπαρ.

49 Tziatzi-Papagianni 2012, 89: καὶ νύκτωρ δεξιός μοι παρέστηκας ὄνειρος.

ἀλλ᾽ ὅτε μοι Νεμεσηνὸς ὅλον παρέκλινεν ἑαυτὸν
πάντα διδούς, ἃ θέλω, νεκρὸν ἀπεκρέμασο.
τείνεο καὶ ῥήσσου καὶ δάκρυε· πάντα ματαίως·
οὐχ ἕξεις ἔλεον χειρὸς ἀφ᾽ ἡμετέρης.[50]

Now you have stood straight up, nameless one, nor do you fail: you strain as though you would never cease. But when Nemesenos stretched out his entire self next to me on the bed, offering everything I might have wanted, a dead thing you hung there. Strain, burst, and cry! It's all in vain. You will not receive mercy from my hand.

Addressing his erect penis, the narrator berates it for being hard now (ὀρθὸν νῦν ἔστηκας) when it only had dysfunction to offer a willing boy at some previous moment. He will now let his penis suffer in an unrelieved erect state by refusing it masturbation.

Still, Theodoros' letter dismisses much of the content of the dream, as it merely contains things that appear "in a vision" and not the truth.[51] Although he is gladdened in the dream, it is ultimately unfulfilling.[52] He prefers to picture his desired one during the day via a waking vision. He wishes for "true intercourse and conversation,"[53] both of which are double-entendres. He is also grateful for the words in Konstantinos' letters, calling them "beautiful" (ὡραίους), a word often associated with sexually desirable persons. And these beautiful words come on like an insistent lover. In speaking of how these words affect him, Theodoros corrects Konstantinos' friendly biting (δακεῖν … φιλικῶς) to say, instead, that they bite him in a desirous or erotic way (δάκνειν ἐρωτικῶς), and also that they are "turning over his soul." This turning over is worth attention. In this increasingly erotic milieu, that is, biting has just been made desirous/erotic (ἐρωτικῶς), "turning over" (στρέφειν) turns out to have a relevant sexual life.

It will be useful to quote the final words of the letter here:

… πολλαπλασίαν ἐδεξάμην τὴν ἀμοιβήν, τοὺς ὡραίους σου λόγους καὶ γλυκερούς, οἵπερ ἐν τῷ δάκνειν ἐρωτικῶς καὶ στρέφειν μου τὴν ψυχὴν πλέον

50 *Greek Anthology* 12.232.

51 Tziatzi-Papagianni 2012, 89: κατὰ τὴν φαντασίαν.

52 I should note here that εὐφροσύνης and εὐφραίνειν ('gladness' and 'to be glad', the latter appearing twice) are well regarded as echoes of εὐφρανθέντες in Konstantinos' letter (Tziatzi-Papagianni 2012, 89 and 90).

53 Tziatzi-Papagianni 2012, 89: ἀληθοῦς … συνουσίας καὶ ὁμιλίας.

> εὐωδιάζουσιν ἤπερ ὁ ἐπαινεθεὶς ἀνθοσμίας οἶδεν εὐφραίνειν καρδίαν ἀνθρώπων ἢ καὶ τὸ νέκταρ αὐτό, ᾧπερ οἱ μάκαρες ἐμεθύσκοντο.[54]
>
> I have received recompense many times over for yesterday's fruits, these fruits that have nothing brilliant about them other than the fact that they were chosen [for you by me], [recompense that is these] beautiful and sweet words of yours, words that, through desirous/erotic biting and turning over my soul, are fragrant. [And they are] more fragrant than [even] how the praised scent of flowers knows how to gladden the heart of men or even nectar itself, on which the blessed ones used to get drunk.

A reader of the letter has quite a carnal vision in their mind: the emperor biting Theodoros on, what?, the neck and then turning him over to … oh wait, it's the soul. The arrival of the soul is deflating and decorporealising, but it does not evacuate the immediately preceding words of semantic content. The reader has been on a journey that the soul (ψυχή) cannot erase. Indeed, "turning over" (στρέφειν) has an eye-opening semantic range in the *Greek Anthology*. Corporeal, this verb refers to anal penetration on four occasions.

Four epigrams, two from Book 5 and two from Book 12, show that this verb can be construed as designating a man turning someone, male or female, over or around in order to penetrate them anally. At 5.54.5–6, Dioscorides suggests that if one's wife (or concubine) is pregnant, anal sex provides a good substitute enjoyment: "[H]aving turned your bed-partner over (στρέψας), enjoy her buttocks that are like the rose, practising boyish Kypris"[55] (note too the presence of the rose). In another poem, also from Book 5, Markos Argentarios addressing devotees of male love, assures them that if they don't have a boy at hand and only a girl or a woman, there is a solution, anal intercourse: "… having turned over Menophila of the beautiful hips, suppose in your mind that you possess male Menophilos himself in his recesses."[56] There is an epigram by Kallimakhos in Book 12, which is one of the few poems in this book of the anthology not concerned with the love of boys. After telling the young men that they should not spend time with a female runaway slave,[57] Kallimakhos concludes the poem by implying that she is (probably) being anally penetrated: "For I know that she, worthy to be stoned, is in some kind of way being

54 Tziatzi-Papagianni 2012, 89–90.

55 … στρέψας ῥοδοειδέι τέρπεο πυγῇ / τὴν ἄλοχον, νομίσας ἀρσενόπαιδα Κύπριν.

56 5.116.5–6: … στρέψας Μηνοφίλαν εὐίσχιον ἐν φρεσὶν ἔλπου / αὐτὸν ἔχειν κόλποις ἄρσενα Μηνόφιλον.

57 12.73.3: τὴν δρῆστιν μὴ ὑποδέχεσθε, νέοι.

turned over around here and badly loved."[58] In poem 93, also from Book 12, Rhianos makes a list of dazzling boys who can command a man's attention. Theodoros or Philokles are truly beautiful to gaze upon.[59] The next boy mentioned, Leptines, is our point of interest. His gorgeous body is the object of a compound verb built on *strephein, epistrephein*. This verb both refers both to turning things over (it is close in meaning to the uncompounded verb, στρέφειν) and to perception:

> ἢν δ' ἐπὶ Λεπτίνεω στρέψῃς δέμας, οὐκέτι γυῖα
> κινήσεις, ἀλύτῳ δ' ὡς ἀδάμαντι μένεις
> ἴχνια κολληθείς …[60]
>
> If you turn over/gaze upon the body of Leptines, no longer will you move your limbs, but as though glued down by unbreakable adamant, you stay your steps …

Epistrephein is polysemous here, able to be taken either as the handling of the boy's body or as the perception of his body. These lines speak of the narrator walking no further, but the suspicion that an impressively hard erection has arisen also hovers at the margins, perhaps the glans does not flop at this point and even has an adamantine hardness to it? The facets in meaning in this verb of physicality and perception accordingly are well-seen as both being in play. When Theodoros speaks of erotic biting from his emperor and then to a turning over, the reader is being taken on a journey that creates memories that not even the subsequent specification of the soul can erase. In these letters, then, Konstantinos and Theodoros play an intensely teasing and corporealising game. The content of these two letters are but a glimpse into a series of exchanges that provide insight into elite male culture in the empire of the mid-900s. There is, of course, more to say about the other letters they exchanged with each other.[61]

---

58 12.73.5–6: … ἐκεῖσε γὰρ ἡ λιθόλευστος / κείνη καὶ δύσερως οἶδ' ὅτι που στρέφεται. NOTE: It is possible that it is not anal penetration simply; it could be rape if δύσερως can be seen to drive interpretation past the unproductive pleasures of anal sex into sexual coercion of all kinds.

59 12.93.3–6.

60 12.93.7–9.

61 Much more about these letters (and other contemporary letter collections) will appear in my forthcoming monograph: "Between Byzantine Men: Desire, Brotherhood, and Male Culture in the Medieval Empire."

6 Conclusion

These two letters present same-sex desire from a number of angles. Desire provides a strong graphic metaphor for friendship and regard. Konstantinos proposes pederasty while Theodoros is more egalitarian. Both see the desire for each other as something that appears both in dreams and in waking visions. Furthermore, waking-visions are not our idle day-dreams. For the Byzantines the waking vision (ὕπαρ) had a privileged connection to reality, facts, and truth. This connection may be hard to grasp in this time of privileging the unconscious dream as more revelatory than what we might choose to think of while awake. Furthermore, the manipulation of desire's phenomenology and its frequent appearance make maintaining the idea that it's just a formal feature of the genre, at least in these letters, difficult to maintain. Is it not time to grant that we cannot rule out actual desire between these two men? They certainly can conceive of it. The knowing play, perceptible in both the letters and in the intertexts, with what is metaphorical and what is real poses a hard question to anyone who would insist that desire between these Byzantine men was not conceivable to them. Whatever the case, though, these letters attest to low rates of what we could call, anachronistically, homophobia in tenth-century Byzantium.

7 Appendix

Letter 3

Οὐκ εἰσὶν ἐμὰ τὰ γράμματα, μὰ τὴν σὴν ἀρετήν, ἀλλά τι σμικρὸν παπαδύλλιον καὶ εὐτελὲς πρὸς τὴν τοιαύτην γραφὴν διηκόνησεν· ἡ δὲ ὑπαγόρευσις, εἰ καὶ ἡμεῖς ἀρνησόμεθα, ἀλλὰ δήλη τυγχάνει τοῖς τὸν ἡμέτερον ἤδη χαρακτῆρα γινώσκουσι· καὶ γὰρ τὸ σαθρὸν τοῦ ἡμετέρου νοὸς καὶ τὸ βάρβαρον καὶ σόλοικον τῆς ἡμετέρας ἀμουσίας οὐ τοῖς πολλοῖς ἄγνωστον καὶ κεκρυμμένον ἐστί, ἀλλὰ δῆλον καὶ προφανές, κἂν ἡμεῖς ἀπαρνώμεθα.

Τὰς δὲ γλυκείας ὄντως καὶ μελιρρύτους ὀπώρας δεξάμενοι καὶ τὸν ἀνθοσμίαν οἶνον, τὸ<ν> ὑπὲρ τὸ πάλαι λαλούμενον νέκταρ, ἀπεγευσάμεθα μὲν οἱονεὶ τῶν σῶν γλυκερῶν χειλέων σμικρόν τινα ἀσπασμὸν εἰσδεξάμενοι, ἐπὶ πλέον δὲ τούτου ἐμφορηθέντες καὶ οἱονεὶ κατὰ τὸ γεγραμμένον εὐφρανθέντες, τὸ θλῖβον καὶ τρύχον τὴν ἡμετέραν καρδίαν ἐγγὺς τῆς κύλικος ἐπιφυόμενον εὕρομεν, ὥσπερ, ὡς οἶμαι, τῷ ῥόδῳ πως ἀναφύεται καὶ ἡ ἄκανθα. Νόμος γὰρ οὗτος ἔρωτος καὶ φιλίας ἀνοθεύτου καὶ ἀληθοῦς καὶ γλυκείας καὶ ἐρασμίας. Τί γὰρ ἀκάνθης ἢ ῥομφαίας διστόμου πληκτικώτερον, εἰ μὴ στέρησις ἐρωμένου καὶ φίλου ἀποικία καὶ ἀπουσία, καὶ τοιούτου οὕτω πιστοῦ καὶ φιλοσόφου καὶ κατὰ πάντα ἤδη τὸ πρωτεῖον ἔχοντος; Μανικὸς γὰρ ὄντως ἐραστὴς τυγχάνω πρὸς τοὺς ἐμὲ οὕτω φιλοῦντας—μαίνομαι γάρ, ἀλλὰ σωφρόνως·

οἶδε γὰρ φιλία πάντα καινοτομεῖν. Σοὶ δὲ τὰ πλείονα παραχωροῦμεν ὡς εἰδότες οὕτω πρὸς ἡμᾶς καὶ διακείμενον καὶ διακεισόμενον.

Ἐμὲ δὲ καὶ πολλὰ καὶ πολλάκις οἱ ὄνειροι καὶ ταράσσουσι καὶ εὐφραίνουσι, καὶ ὡσπερεὶ τὸν φίλτατον ἐν χερσὶ διδόασι καὶ προσομιλεῖν πλανῶσι καὶ καταφιλεῖν ἀπατῶσι. Τὸ δὲ ὕπαρ πολλὰ καταρῶμαι καὶ ζημίας πρόξενον ἡγοῦμαι· οὗ γὰρ καθ' ὕπνους ἀπολαύω καὶ ποσῶς τῆς ἐφέσεως ἐμφοροῦμαι {καὶ} ἀφυπνισθεὶς μάταιος τῆς τοιαύτης ἡδονῆς εὑρίσκομαι, καὶ εὔχομαι Κυρίῳ τῷ Θεῷ μου δοῦναι καιρὸν φιλῆσαι τὸν φιλούμενον καὶ ποθῆσαι τὸν ποθούμενον καὶ δακεῖν οὐχὶ πληκτικῶς ἀλλὰ φιλικῶς· δάκνουσι γὰρ καὶ οἱ φιλοῦντες, οὐχ ἵνα πλήξωσιν, ἀλλ' ἵνα πλέον ποθήσωσιν. Εὔχου τοίνυν τὸν καιρὸν ἐλθεῖν ἵνα τῆς ἐφέσεως ἀπολαύσωμεν.[62]

These things of mine are not a letter, by your virtue (*arete*), but something small has done service, characteristic of a little priest and cheap, in answer to the sort of letter [you have written]! The idea [that this is so], even if I will deny it, is surely clear to those who know what I'm like. Indeed, the shoddy state of my mind and the barbarity and incorrect usage of my muse-less state are not unknown to many and it's not hidden from them either. It is clear and evident, even if I should venture to deny it.

Having received the summer fruit, truly sweet and dripping with honey, and the wine scented with flowers, which was called in very ancient times nectar, I have tasted it as though having received some small kiss from your sweet lips. But, while filled up by this all the more and as though, according to what has been written, gladdened, I found constriction and distress in my heart arising in the company of my wine glass, just as, I suppose, the thorn thrives, somehow, near the rose. This is the law of *eros* and of *philia* that's unbastardised, true, sweet, and lovable/erotic. What is more wounding than thorns, or a two-edged sword, unless it be the loss of one's *eromenos*, the absence and being away of a friend, and of such a one so trustworthy, wisdom-loving, and holding the first place surely in all things. For I am, as it turns out, an *erastes* maddened as regards those who have *philia* for me, for I am mad but [I am mad] temperately, for friendship [as far as I am concerned] knows how to innovate in all things. But I allow more to you, as I know that you are well-disposed to us and will remain so.

Many times and in many ways, dreams disturb and delight me. And just as if they put my dear one in my hands, they counterfeit conversation/intercourse and deceive me about kissing. But then I curse many times the waking-vision and believe it a bringer of loss, for what I enjoy in dreams and however much of desire I am filled with, I, awakened, discover myself bereft of such pleasure and I pray to my Lord God to give me the moment to kiss my dear friend and the moment to desire my desired one and to bite him not in a hostile way but in a friendly way, for those who feel *philia* bite not

62 *Letter 3*, Konstantinos to Theodoros (Tziatzi-Papagianni 2012, 87–88).

so much so that they may harm but so that they may desire all the more. Pray therefore for the moment to come so that we may satisfy our desire.

Letter 4

Τὴν ἐκ τῆς ἀπουσίας ὑμῶν χθεσινὴν κατήφειαν ἡ σήμερον ἐλθοῦσά μοι τιμία καὶ πάνσοφος καὶ φρονιμωτάτη γραφὴ διεσκέδασε καὶ πρὸς εὐθυμίαν μετήμειψε, καὶ τὴν ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ μου φλόγα τοῦ πόθου τῆς βασιλείου ὑμῶν στεφηφόρου καὶ θείας κεφαλῆς ἐπὶ πλεῖον ἀνῆψέ τε καὶ ἐξέκαυσε, καὶ ἤδη μου φλέγεται ἡ ψυχὴ ἐπιθυμοῦσα καὶ ζητοῦσα τὰ ἐλπιζόμενα· οἱ δὲ ἐκ τῆς γλυκοστόμου καὶ μελιρρύτου σου πηγῆς, τοῦ σωφρονοῦντος καὶ παγχρύσου σου στόματος, ἐπιδαψιλευόμενοί μοι κρουνοὶ οὐ μόνον <οὐ> σβεννύουσι τὴν φλόγα, ἀλλὰ καὶ προσανάπτουσιν. Ὅθεν καὶ μεθ' ἡμέραν φαντάζομαι τὸν ποθούμενον, τὸν χρυσαυγῆ μοι καὶ ὑπέρλαμπρον, καὶ νύκτωρ δεξιός μοι παρέστηκας ὄνειρος, καὶ σὲ βλέπω μετὰ τοῦ γενναίου καὶ μετὰ θαύματος ἀγαπωμένου ἀεὶ βλοσυροῦ καὶ βασιλικοῦ μειδιάματος· καί ποτέ σε κατὰ τοὺς ὕπνους προετρεψάμην ταχύτερον θεῖν, ἵνα μή τις προφθάσῃ σε καὶ ἀποκλείσῃ σοι τὰ βασίλεια, καὶ αὐτὸς συμπροεθυμούμην μὴ ἀπολείπεσθαι, ἀλλὰ τῆς ὀξύτητος τοῦ ὑμετέρου ἵππου παντ' ἐγίνετο δεύτερα.

Ἀλλὰ ταῦτα μὲν τῆς ἀληθινῆς εὐφροσύνης ἀπολειπόμενα, ὅσον εὐφραίνειν κατὰ τὴν φαντασίαν δοκεῖ, τοσοῦτον ἀνιᾷ κατὰ τὴν ἀλήθειαν. Ἡμᾶς δὲ εἴη τῆς ἀληθοῦς ἐμφορηθῆναι συνουσίας καὶ ὁμιλίας σου, ὦ Θεὲ καὶ Κύριε, ὁ πάντα μετασκευάζων ἐπὶ τὸ βέλτιον.

Τῶν δὲ χθίζων ὀπωρῶν, οὐδὲν ἐχουσῶν λαμπρὸν ἢ μόνην τὴν προαίρεσιν, πολλαπλασίαν ἐδεξάμην τὴν ἀμοιβήν, τοὺς ὡραίους σου λόγους καὶ γλυκερούς, οἵπερ ἐν τῷ δάκνειν ἐρωτικῶς καὶ στρέφειν μου τὴν ψυχὴν πλέον εὐωδιάζουσιν ἤπερ ὁ ἐπαινεθεὶς ἀνθοσμίας οἶδεν εὐφραίνειν καρδίαν ἀνθρώπων ἢ καὶ τὸ νέκταρ αὐτό, ᾧπερ οἱ μάκαρες ἐμεθύσκοντο.[63]

Your letter, which honours me and is all knowing and quite smart, arrived today [and] has dispelled yesterday's gloom over being apart from you. It has changed [the gloom] to cheerfulness and sets alight and causes the flame in my heart to burn, [as well as the flame] of desire for the crowned and divine head of our imperial one. Already my soul is on fire, as it desires and seeks hoped for things. The sources of the sweet-mouthed and honey-dripping spring of you, of your wise and all-golden mouth, [the sources] lavish for me not only quench the flame, they enkindle it. Hence then, during the day I envision for myself my desired one, gold gleaming for me and beyond light-filled, and during the night you, a dream, stood at my right, and I see you in your nobility and in the beloved marvelousness of your always valiant and imperial smile. And at the moment I urged you to run faster in my dreams so that no one would beat you and close

63 *Letter 4*, Theodoros to Konstantinos (Tziatzi-Papagianni 2012, 88–90).

the palace to you, and I took zealous part so as not to be left behind. All things were second to "the snorting" of your "horse."[64]

But these things fall short of true gladness, for however much one seems to be gladdened in a vision, to that extent one rages against the truth. May it happen that we be filled with your true intercourse and conversation, O God and Lord who converts everything to a better state.

I have received recompense many times over for yesterday's fruits, these fruits that have nothing brilliant about them other than the fact that they were chosen [for you by me], [recompense that is these] beautiful and sweet words of yours, words that, through desirous/erotic biting and turning over my soul, are fragrant. [And they are] more fragrant than [even] how the praised scent of flowers knows how to gladden the heart of men or even nectar itself, on which the blessed ones used to get drunk.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

Anthologia Graeca. Thesaurus Linguae Graecae. www.stephanus.tlg.uci.edu.

Homer. *Iliad*. Thesaurus Linguae Graecae. www.stephanus.tlg.uci.edu.

Homer. *Odyssey*. Thesaurus Linguae Graecae. www.stephanus.tlg.uci.edu.

Julian, Emperor (2004) *L'Empereur Julien: Oeuvres Completes, Lettres et Fragments*, ed. J. Bidez (Paris).

Konstantinos VII Porphyrogennetos (2012) *Theodori Metropolitae Cyzici Epistulae: Accedunt Epistulae Mutuae Constantini Porphyrogeniti*, ed. M. Tziatzi-Papagianni (Berlin).

Nikolaos Mystikos (1973) *Letters*, eds. and trans. R. J. H. Jenkins and L. G. Westerlink (Washington DC).

Novum Testamentum. Thesaurus Linguae Graecae. www.stephanus.tlg.uci.edu.

Septuagint. Thesaurus Linguae Graecae. www.stephanus.tlg.uci.edu.

Souda (1984) Ed. A. Adler, *Suidae Lexicon*, Lexicographi Graeci 1 (Munich; repr. 2001). www.stoa.org/sol-entries.

Theodoros of Kyzikos (2012) *Theodori Metropolitae Cyzici Epistulae: Accedunt Epistulae Mutuae Constantini Porphyrogeniti*, ed. M. Tziatzi-Papagianni (Berlin).

Theophanes Continuatus (2015) *Chronographiae Quae Theophanis Continuati Nomine Fertur Libri I–IV* (*Nuper Repertis Schedis Caroli de Boor Adiuvantibus*), eds. J. M. Featherstone and J. Signes-Codoñer (Berlin, New York).

64 cf. Ier. 8:16.

Secondary Sources

Angelidi, C. (2002) "Αισθήσεις, σεξουαλικότητα και οπτασίες," in K. Nikolaou (ed.) *Ανοχή και Καταστολή στους Μέσους Χρόνους* (Athens), 221–229.

Angelidi, C. and Calofonos, G. (eds.) (2014) *Dreaming in Byzantium and Beyond* (Farnham and Burlington, VT).

Calofonos, G. (2014) "Dream Narratives in the *Continuation of Theophanes*," in Angelidi and Calofonos 2014, 95–123.

Cameron, A. (1993) *The Greek Anthology: From Meleager to Planudes* (New York).

Darrouzès, J. (1960) *Épistoliers byzantins du Xe Siècle*, Archives de l'Orient Chrétien 6 (Paris).

Demosthenous, A. (2004) *Philia kai homophylophilia ton 11o kai 12o aiona sto Vyzantio* (Thessalonike).

Grünbart, M. (2005) *Formen der Anrede im Byzantinischen Brief vom 6. bis zum 12. Jahrhundert* (Vienna).

Karlsson, G. (1962) *Ideologie et ceremonial dans l'epistolographie byzantine* (Uppsala).

Laiou, A. E. (1992) *Mariage, amour et parenté à Byzance aux XIe–XIIIe siècles* (Paris).

Lemerle, P. (1986) *Byzantine Humanism: The First Phase: Notes and Remarks on Education and Culture in Byzantium from Its Origins to the 10th Century* (Canberra).

Masterson, M. (forthcoming a) *Between Byzantine Men: Desire, Brotherhood, and Male Culture in the Medieval Empire* (London).

Masterson, M. (forthcoming b) 'Revisiting the Bachelorhood of Emperor Basil II', in S. Tougher (ed.) *The Emperor in the Byzantine World* (Farnham and Burlington, VT).

Messis, C. (2006) 'La Construction sociale, les 'réalités' rhétoriques et les représentations de l'identité masculine à Byzance'. Unpublished PhD thesis (Paris).

Messis, C. (2008) 'Des amitiés intimes à l'institution d'un lien social: l' "adelphopoiia" à Byzance', in P. Odorico and N. Pasero (eds) *Corrispondenza d'amorosi sensi: L'omoerotismo nella letteratura medievale* (Alessandria), 31–64.

Mullett, M. (1988) 'Byzantium: A Friendly Society?', *Past and Present* 118, 3–24.

Mullett, M. (1997) *Theophylacht of Ochrid: Reading the Letters of a Byzantine Archbishop* (Aldershot).

Mullett, M. (1999) 'From Byzantium, with Love', in L. James (ed.) *Desire and Denial in Byzantium* (Aldershot), 3–22.

Mullett, M. (2007) *Letters, Literacy and Literature in Byzantium* (Burlington).

Odorico, P. (1995) 'L'indicible transgression', in M. Fögen (ed.) *Ordnung und Aufruhr im Mittelalter: Historische und juristische Studien zur Rebellion* (Frankfurt am Main), 301–312.

Patlagean, E. (1985) 'Byzance X^e-XIe', in P. Ariès and G. Duby (eds) *Histoire de la vie privée. 1. De l'Empire romain à l'an mil* (Paris), 547–627.

Pitsakis, K. (2008) 'L'Homoérotisme dans la culture byzantine: le cadre normatif et ses reflets littéraires', in P. Odorico and N. Pasero (eds) *Corrispondenza d'amorosi sensi: L'omoerotismo nella letteratura medievale* (Alessandria), 1–29.

Richlin, A. (1992) *The Garden of Priapus: Sexuality and Aggression in Roman Humor*, Rev. edn (New York).

Schneider, J. (2008) 'L'Expression hyperbolique de l'amitié dans les lettres d'un moine byzantin', in P. Zoberman (ed.) *Queer: Ecritures de la différence? Volume 1: Autres temps, autres lieux* (Paris), 79–101.

Smythe, D. C. (1999) 'In Denial: Same-Sex Desire in Byzantium', in L. James (ed.) *Desire and Denial in Byzantium* (Aldershot), 139–148.

Tomadakis, N. (1993) *Βυζαντινή Επιστολογραφία*, 2nd edn (Thessalonica).

Treadgold, W. (2013) *The Middle Byzantine Historians* (New York).

CHAPTER 8

The Dream Come True? Matthew of Edessa and the Return of the Roman Emperor

Maximilian Lau

In producing her monograph on the twelfth-century Armenian *Chronicle* of Matt'ēos Uṙhayec'I, often known as Matthew of Edessa, Tara Andrews proposes its structure is provided by his numerous references to the prophecies of the 11th century by the *Vardapet* (scholarly priest) Yovhannēs Kozeṙn.[1] Andrews argues convincingly that these prophecies act as a "table of contents" for the trajectory of history that Matthew was attempting to portray, and indeed that those events which detract from this template of history were omitted. One of the most significant of Kozeṙn's prophecies was a vision he supposedly had in 1036/7, which foretold that disasters would soon strike the Armenians and the whole Christian world. This would lead to sixty years of oppression by "a people cursed by God", the Turks, referred to by the classicising term "Persians". Once these years had passed, the Franks would rise up and free Jerusalem from bondage, though this would be answered sevenfold by the ferocity of the Turks. Fifty years after this, however, the Romans would start gaining strength, little by little, and then:

> As if waking from sleep the king of the Romans arises and comes like an eagle against the Persian forces with a fearful multitude like sand on the shore of the sea. He will come inflamed by fire, and out of fear of him all creatures will tremble, and the Persians and all the foreign forces shall take their flight to the other side of the great Gihon river.[2] And then the

1 Andrews 2017, 30–43. She posits the *Chronicle* was completed sometime between 1130 and 1137; see below for further discussion on this, however. For Kozeṙn's prophecy, see MacEvitt 2008, 27–29, 177–179, who ironically uses the prophecies as a framework for his own work, while not acknowledging that Matthew does the same. On Kozeṙn himself, see Andrews 2017, 30 n. 26.

2 The river Gihon is mentioned in Genesis 2:13 as one of the four rivers that sprang forth from Eden, together with the Tigris, Euphrates and the similarly topographically uncertain Pishon. It has been associated with Ethiopia and India, with the Nile, with the modern river Aras in eastern Turkey, or another unknown Mesopotamian river. This citation could therefore refer to the Turks specifically being driven out of traditional Armenian lands or, more rhetorically,

© KONINKLIJKE BRILL NV, LEIDEN, 2018 | DOI:10.1163/9789004375710_010

> Roman king will take and rule the whole land for many years; and all the earth will receive renewal, and the foundation for buildings will be laid, and thus it will be renewed like after the flood.
>
> Եւ յայնժամ որպէս ի քնոյ զարթուցեալ՛ լինի թագաւորն Հռոմայեցւոց, և հասանէ որպէս զարծուի ի վերայ զաւրացն Պարսից ահագին բազմութեամբ՛ որպէս զաւազ առ եզր ծովու: Ելցէ որպես զհուր բորբոքեալ, և յահէ նորա դողան ամենայն արարածք, և Պարսիկք և ամենայն զաւրք այլազգեացն արասցեն զփախուստ իւրեանց յայնկոյս մեծ գետոյն Ջահունից:
>
> Եւ յայնժամ թագաւորն Հռոմայեցւոց տիրելով տիրէ ամենայն աշխարհի զամս բազումս, և նորոգումն առնու ամենայն երկիր, և շինութեան հիմն արկանի, և այնպէս նորանայ նա որպէս զկնի ջրհեղեղին.[3]

The prophecy continues that the Romans will take a great amount of treasure and captives from the Persians, before eventually "all the sovereignty of the earth will settle in the hand of the Roman king".[4] The first part of this prophecy refers to the Turkish incursions after the battle of Manzikert (1071), and then the capture of Jerusalem by the Franks of the First Crusade. Whether Matthew had a specific figure in mind as to the returning "Roman king" is, however, an open question.[5]

I posit that Matthew had Emperor John II Komnenos (fl. 1087–1143) specifically in mind for this "Roman king", and that that this was due to a rapprochement in the 1130s between him and a faction of Armenian Cilicians who favoured a return to imperial rule, politically and ecclesiastically. Matthew's chronicle was written in Marash and Edessa itself while they were fought over by the eastern Romans, crusaders, Turks and Armenians, so his chronicle provides a unique insight into the condition of the region and its peoples at this time. I propose that there was no monolithic Armenian voice during this period, but diverse factions in a divided land, and that Matthew's continuator, Gregory the Priest, was part of a faction opposed to the empire. I shall also highlight lesser known documents such as a letter between the Armenian *katholikos* and Emperor John, which testifies to this attempted rapprochement.

---

as being driven to the ends of the earth. See Bromiley 1979–1988, 467, also Andrews 2017, 209 n. 14.

3 See Andrews 2017, 35–36 for translation, 208–209 for the original Armenian, which is also translated and paraphrased in MacEvitt 2008, 27–28.

4 Ibid.

5 Andrews 2017, 42.

I outline the specifics of John's dealings with the Armenians, his conquest of Cilicia, and how that fed into Matthew's positive opinion of John. This will be followed by a discussion of how the prophecy related above fits John, particularly in regard to his actions during the campaign of 1137–8. I then demonstrate how it is therefore possible for Matthew to have lived and written long enough to have experienced John's conquest of Cilicia, with his brief overlordship of Antioch and Edessa, and still hold a positive opinion of John II Komnenos. Thus I will also reopen the question of the date of Matthew's last entry in his chronicle; Andrews believes Matthew's positive opinion of John means that Matthew could not have written the 1137 entry.

It is useful to first understand that the character of John II that Matthew presents is particularly positive in contrast to his more mixed portrayal of John's father and predecessor, Alexios I Komnenos (fl. c.1056–1118). Though Alexios is lauded for defeating a nomadic invasion and quashing heresy in Constantinople, and is described as, "a good and wise man and strong in warfare and very merciful to the faithful in Christ", he is also condemned for insisting that Armenians receive a second, Chalcedonian baptism, a policy that Matthew notes John specifically reversed.[6] Equally, he is accused of betraying the Frankish crusaders by allowing them to go hungry, and then arranging for them to face a Turkish army.[7] Andrews notes that such a pro-Latin take on Alexios' behaviour makes it likely that Matthew was writing this section in the late 1130s. This is due to the 1141 synod in Jerusalem where the Armenian, Latin and Syriac churches attempted their own rapprochement, while the Armenian Cilician Princes and the Crusaders had joined in alliance against the dual threats of Amad ad-Din Zengi, and Emperor John.[8] The situation was not, however, as clear-cut as that: when John drove Prince Leon of Cilicia away from his siege of Seleukeia (1136), Prince Raymond of Antioch (fl. c.1115–1149) treacherously captured Leon during peace negotiations between them.[9] Thus, the suggestion that the Cilician Armenians and the Latins were drawing closer together in the late 1130s requires re-examination.

6 Žamanakagrutʿiwn (Mēlikʿ-Adsmean and Tēr-Mikʿayēlean 1898, 345); Matthew of Edessa, *Chronicle* (Dostourian 1993, 225) [hence *Matthew*]; Andrews 2017, 97. This practice is uncorroborated outside of *Matthew*.

7 Žamanakagrutʿiwn (Mēlikʿ-Adsmean and Tēr-Mikʿayēlean 1898, 282–284); *Matthew* (Dostourian 1993, 225); Andrews 2017, 97–98.

8 Andrews 2017, 97.

9 Kinnamos, *Epitome* (Meinike 1836), 16; Choniates, *Historia* (van Dieten 1975, 21); William of Tyre, *Chron*. 14.3 (Huygens 1986, 635); Ibn al-Athir, *Chron*. (Richard 2006, 227); Italikos *Lettres et Discours* "Λόγος βασιλικός" (Gautier 1972, 247) [henceforth: *Italikos*]; Basilakes *Orationes et Epistolae* "Λόγος εἰς τὸν ἀοίδιμον βασιλέα" (Garzya 1984, 54–55) [henceforth: *Basilakes*]; Edwards 1987, 221–229; Lilie 1993, 114.

1 The Divided Lands of Armenian Cilicia

Armenian Cilicia in the late 1130s was anything but united. Rival powers had competed for control of the region since the 11th century. With the establishment of the principality of Antioch after the First Crusade, the Latins had claimed much of Cilicia and enforced their rule over major cities, only to lose that territory to Leon's older brother, Prince Thoros II.[10] Bohemond II of Antioch had then attempted a re-conquest in 1130, such that Ghazi Danishmend was called in by Leon, killing Bohemond, but Ghazi was unable to follow up this victory due to John's capture of Kastamon, which brought Ghazi back north.[11] Unsupported by Ghazi, Leon was still able to capture Mamistra, Tarsus and Adana in 1131, and add Sarventikar to his conquests in 1133.[12]

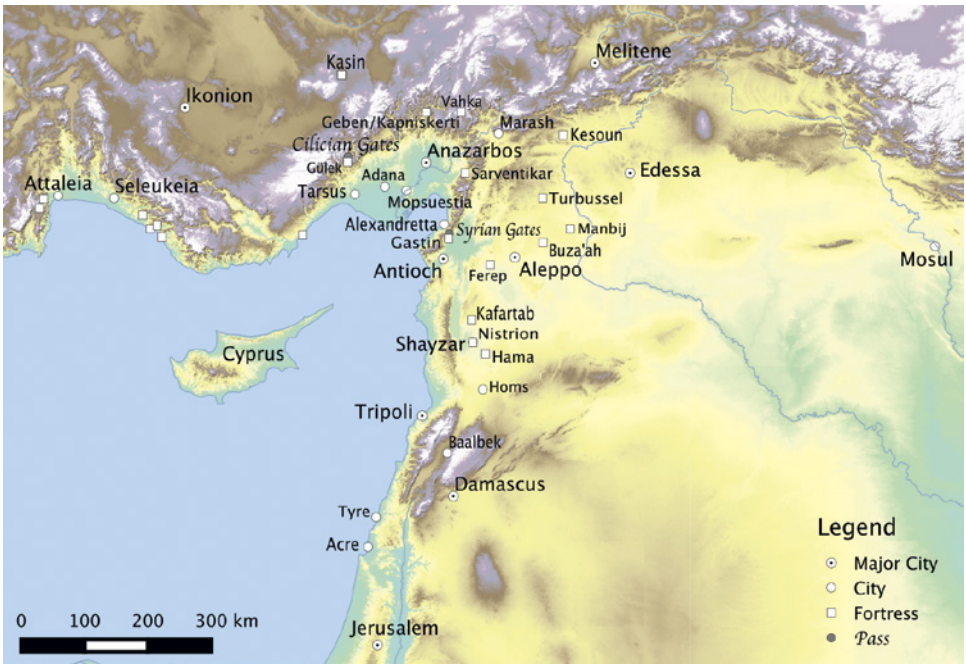
His hold over the territory was, nevertheless, weak, and our sources mention bandits and pirates in the region, in addition to enclaves of Turks, Latins, and people whom the Greek sources call "Isaurians" who were still loyal to Constantinople.[13] Leon's fragile rule was tested as one of Raymond's first actions as the new prince of Antioch was to renew Antiochene claims in the region, in alliance with Baldwin of Marash, one of the leading nobles of the County of Edessa and the previous ruler of Sarventikar. Despite this, Leon was able to gain the support of Count Joscelin II of Edessa, his nephew by

10 There is a great deal of uncertainty about who ruled what in this entire period—Thoros conquered Anazarbos c.1111, but sources disagree concerning whether it was previously owned by the Latins, Byzantium, or an independent lord. *Matthew*, 200–219; Smbat Sparapet, *Chronique* (Dédéyan 1980, 38–53); J. Ghazarian 2000, 113–115; Edwards 1987, 5–6; Dédéyan 2003, 593–614, 716–728 respectively.

11 William of Tyre, *Chron*. 13.10, 13.28, 14 (Huygens 1986, 597, 623–625, 631–632); Ibn al-Athir, *Chron*. (Richard 2006, 279); Orderic Vitalis (Chibnall 1978, 134–136); Michael the Syrian 16.3 (Ibrahim 2009, 610); Kinnamos, *Epitome* (Meinike 1836, 13); Choniates, *Historia* (van Dieten 1975, 18).

12 Smbat Sparapet, *Chronique* (Dédéyan 1980, 53); William of Tyre, *Chron*. 13.27 (Huygens 1986, 623–624); Ghazarian 2000, 115–116; Edwards 1987, 6.

13 Italikos' *Oration* tells us that Tarsus was under the control of "Keltic barbarians" while Anazarbos was under the control of Armenians: *Italikos* 253. Prodromos' Oration mentions the defeated peoples to include Italians, Syrians, Latins, Persians, "καὶ σὺν Ἰσαύροις τοῖς πικροῖς καὶ σὺν παισὶ Κιλίκων", which, though including Syria as well as Cilicia, implies that there was a difference between "Isaurians" and the "sorrowing sons of Cilicia" that was not merely geographical: Prodromos (Hörandner 1974, XI, lines 133–136). Kinnamos even calls this expedition John's "Isaurian wars": Kinnamos, *Epitome* (Meinike 1836, 16). Italikos also mentions clearing the roads and taming the mountains multiple times, implying a great deal of chaos: *Italikos* 247. There are occasional clues based on what names sources give to sites, such as the Armenian toponym Geben, used by Kinnamos amongst otherwise Greek toponyms, hinting strongly that this site was therefore Armenian: Kinnamos, *Epitome* (Meinike 1836, 20); Edwards 1987, 129, n. 10.



MAP 8.1 Cilicia and the Near East, c. 1140. Maximilian Lau © 2016.

marriage, likely fearing he too would be forced to bow to Antioch, and together they defeated Raymond's forces.[14] In his triumph, however, Leon consented to a personal meeting with Baldwin to negotiate peace terms, during which he was treacherously seized and imprisoned in Antioch.

These events highlight the puzzle of who ruled what and when in Cilicia, which is both a historiographical and a source issue. Armenian histories, in particular, tend to be overly teleological regarding the development of the Kingdom of Armenia later in the 12th century, seeing its roots in this period in both Choniates and Armenian sources that were all written once said kingdom had become a reality.[15] Furthermore, some historians draw continuity from antiquity through to modern Armenia, seeing any action by Armenians as part of their supposedly eternal nationhood.[16] Such a clear teleology is, however,

14 William of Tyre, *Chron*. 14.3 (Huygens 1986, 635).

15 In these histories John is therefore the oppressor, delaying the state of Armenia from emerging again: Gregory the Priest (Dostourian 1993, 241–242); Smbat Sparapet, *Chronique* (Dédéyan 1980, 9–37).

16 Choniates, *Historia* (van Dieten 1975, 21); Smbat Sparapet, *Chronique* (Dédéyan 1980, 53); Nicolle 2007, 161, 182; Ghazarian 2000; Edwards 1987.

untenable in the 1130s, with the region one of chaos and possibility, rather than an Armenian state in waiting.[17] Kinnamos does not mention who owned what, while William of Tyre tells us that Antioch had ruled the province undisputedly for forty years.[18] The contemporary Greek court sources merely evidence that the rhetors of Constantinople seem to have had little idea as to who governed what.[19] All that these sources and the later confusion reveal is that John's campaign was aptly timed to take advantage of this chaos.

The situation in Cilicia had disintegrated further when Leon's three sons fell out in their father's absence, leading to the eldest, Constantine, being blinded by his brothers, until they too were possibly captured.[20] Whether this occurred or not, when John invaded in 1137, Prince Leon, and possibly his heirs, were absent, and those pledged to him were in open war with Antioch, though Joscelin of Edessa was ostensibly still an ally. Only in the wake of John's advance across Cilicia, where Tarsus, Adana and Mamistra fell quickly, though Anazarbos then resisted, did a form of Antiochene-Armenian alliance arise.[21] Only at this point did Raymond enter into an agreement with the captive Leon to oppose the emperor, on condition that Leon hand over Adana, Mamistra and Savantikar to Raymond, along with 60,000 dahekans (gold or silver coins), and give his sons as hostages.[22] Though Leon was released, whether he actually handed over these cities to Raymond before John conquered them is unclear in the

17 Hovannisian and Payaslian 2008, 1–93, contain five papers specifically addressing this issue; Lilie and Dédéyan express doubts while outlining diverse opinions on the issue: Lilie 1993, 106; Dédéyan 2003, 593–614.

18 Kinnamos, *Epitome* (Meinike 1836, 16–17); William of Tyre, *Chron*. 14.24 (Huygens 1986, 663).

19 Cf. n. 12 above.

20 William of Tyre, *Chron.* 14.24 (Huygens 1986, 663); Smbat Sparapet, *Chronique* (Dédéyan 1980, 53); Sparapet believes that the Antiochenes won the battle and then captured not only Leon but also Leon's other sons after Constantine was blinded. William of Tyre's account is seen as the more reliable, due to Sparapet's naming of the prince of Antioch as Bohemond, and William's greater chronological proximity to the events. *Matthew* does not mention these details: Lilie 1993, 103–108.

21 Choniates does not mention Marmistra, and has John capture Adana then Tarsus. Kinnamos gives the order of attack as Marmistra, Tarsus, then Adana, while William of Tyre mentions Tarsus, Adana then Marmistra: Choniates, *Historia* (van Dieten 1975, 21, 25); Kinnamos, *Epitome* (Meinike 1836, 16); William of Tyre, *Chron.* 14.24 (Huygens 1986, 663); In terms of the geography, if John went eastwards, then Tarsus, Adana and Marmistra, as William describes, would be the most logical, and this follows the account of the court sources; Ghazarian 2000, 116; Magdalino 1993, 37–38; Birkenmeier 2003, 48, 91–92; Parnell 2010, 152; Lilie 1993, 117–119.

22 Smbat Sparapet, *Chronique* (Dédéyan 1980, 53).

sources.[23] What is clear is that the Armenians and the Latins were hardly on the best of terms, with such an unequal treaty unlikely to encourage concord.

1.1 *The Invasion of Armenian Cilicia: Carrot and Stick*

By contrast, John's own *modus operandi* as he conquered Cilicia combined force with mercy, seeking to present himself as a benign but firm overlord. When he asked the inhabitants of Tarsus to surrender, calling on their shared Christianity as well as notifying them they were surrounded, only on their refusal did he bring up siege weapons. A barrage of missiles then convinced them to surrender, at which point John is said to have treated them well, making them allies (ξύμμαχοι); and it seems Adana and Mamistra then surrendered without resistance, with John "receiving their weapons".[24] Such seems to have been John's favoured approach throughout this campaign—a display of strength, ideally accomplished with siege weapons and thus with no loss of his own soldiers, followed by clemency and peaceful absorption of his former enemy.

Though Anarzarbos resisted more than other fortresses, it too eventually fell to John's siege weapons and a determined assault.[25] With its capture, some sources tell us that Leon's family, and perhaps Leon himself, fell into John's hands—either way, at this point John felt secure enough in his conquest of Cilicia to head south towards Antioch.[26] This he may have done via the

23 The rulers of Tarsus are noted by Basilakes to have been a mixture of Cilicia's "ancient citizens and remaining natives" and "Kelts". Italikos is not as clear, but mentions poetically that John went from "barbarian Kelts to barbarian Armenians, from Tarsus to Anazarbos": *Basilakes* 57; *Italikos* 251.

24 "ὦ μάχης ὁμαιχμίας ἀπογεννώσης καὶ μαιευομένης τὸ φίλιον" is instead used to describe John's new relationship with Tarsus in *Basilakes* 59. Italikos notes John's mercy, displayed in his decision not to kill everyone when he took a city (unlike Alexander), and notes that he received friendly greetings from them. The quotation regarding the weapons specifically refers to Marmistra, but by extension to all the cities in that area: "Μόψου πόλεις ὅπλοις ἐλάμβανες". *Italikos* 252.

25 Choniates, *Historia* (van Dieten 1975, 25–26); Kinnamos, *Epitome* (Meinike 1836, 17); William of Tyre, *Chron*. 14.24 (Huygens 1986, 663); *Basilakes* 60; *Italikos* 254; Edwards 1987, 65–72; Hild and Hellenkemper 1990, 178–185.

26 Italikos mentions that Leon escaped, while his family was seized: *Italikos* 255–256. Gregory the Priest has him captured at Anazarbos: Gregory the Priest (Dostourian 1993), 241; Kinnamos and Choniates do not mention him either way. He came voluntarily to the emperor after the capture of his family according to Smbat Sparapet, *Chronique* (Dédéyan 1980, 53), though this only after John had also captured Vakha on his return from Syria. *Matthew* also implies John only removed Leon from Cilicia after Syria: *Matthew*, 239.

fortress of Tell Hamdun, together with the relocation of Armenians to Cyprus.[27] Though this latter swap is uncorroborated by sources outside of Ibn al-Athir, John had previously relocated Pecheneg and Serb peoples to other parts of the empire, so this would be in keeping with his past dealings with conquered peoples.[28] The decision to go to Antioch demonstrates that John believed his conquest of Cilicia to be already fairly secure. In leaving Cilicia, he was comfortable allowing not only one hostile Armenian fortress at least to remain at his back, and possibly leaving Leon at large, but also a number of cities that had resisted him.[29] In fact, it was here that the separate factions within Armenian Cilicia came into play, as John must have secured local support for his rule.

Though Basilakes' oration relates that there were certain natives and "ancient imperial citizens" who welcomed John, and Lilie judges that most Armenian resistance was broken after this conquest, John must have been proactive in gaining these cities' loyalty.[30] Magdalino and Edwards suggest that he used the rivalry of Armenian nobility, namely, the Hetumids versus the Rupenids.[31] Though there is no direct evidence of this, John had previously used local elites for local campaigns: the Kontostephanoi in the Balkans, a Doux Paktarios at Sozopolis, the descendants of King Grubesa during the Serb campaigns, and he had backed Mas'ud of Ikonion against his brother Arab among the Turks, so the explanation is feasible.[32]

On Lilie's point: John's military control was significant. Both Italikos and Choniates are expansive in describing how John "moved barbarians and mountains, showing his right hand mightier than the mountains are secure …/ placing stele" and clearing the roads of bandits as Theseus did.[33] John not only captured fortresses, implying islands of imperial authority in a sea of lawlessness, but made the effort to clear the countryside and bring security to the

27 Kinnamos mentions John intended to besiege Vakha, but then changed course when he heard Raymond had returned to Antioch. Tell Hamdun, modern Toprakkale, is located at the confluence of routes between Anazarbos, Mopsuestia, Sarventikar (that guarded the Amanus pass) and Alexandretta. It was therefore a natural addition to John's conquests. Kinnamos, *Epitome* (Meinike 1836, 18); Ibn al-Athir, *Chron.* (Richard 2006, 337); Edwards 1987, 244–253, esp. 242, n.9; Hild and Hellenkemper 1990, 445–447.

28 John appears to have carried out a population swap in settling Pechenegs in Serbian lands and Serbs in Anatolia, near Nikomedeia: Choniates, *Historia* (van Dieten 1975, 16).

29 Kinnamos, *Epitome* (Meinike 1836, 20); a new commander for Anazarbos is implied by *Italikos* 155.

30 *Basilakes* 57; Lilie 1993, 118.

31 Magdalino 1993, 37, n. 30; Edwards 1987, 6.

32 For an overview of John's policy of using local nobility for his campaigns, see Lau 2016b.

33 *Italikos* 250; *Basilakes* 56.

region, surely welcomed after years of chaos, a policy unambiguously articulated by Basilakes.[34]

Perhaps more effective than this, however, is the evidence that John made accommodations with the Armenian Church in ways that prefigured Manuel's later attempts at Church union.[35] With the lack of Armenian political leadership at the outset of John's campaign, such an alliance would also have been particularly potent.

2 The Emperor and the Armenian Church

The strongest evidence regarding such a rapprochement is a profession of faith written by the Armenian *katholikos*, Grigor III Pahlavuni (in office 1113–1166), to John. The opening of the letter declares it was requested by John himself.[36] Darrouzès suggests that this profession was part one of two letters, basing this view on the later exchange of letters between Grigor's successor, Nerses, and John's successor, Manuel.[37] This text deals mainly with the Armenian understanding of the two natures of Christ and the Trinity, whilst a second letter was to deal with issues of rites, customs and traditions. The text survives in what is likely a fourteenth—or fifteenth-century manuscript, to which several scribal additions can also be dated.[38] The original twelfth-century introduction summarises the entire letter, and is very complimentary to John. It not only uses stock phrases praising the emperor's piety, but also compares the *katholikos*' intelligence to a drop in the ocean compared to the emperor's, or a star beside the sun; Grigor writes, however, that he hopes that by quoting the church fathers and the holy canons the truth can shine through, heavily implying that it would prove the Armenians orthodox in the emperor's eyes.[39]

The profession of faith that follows does appear suitably orthodox to a Chalcedonian reader, such that the scribal addition notes that the Armenians have written about the two natures of Christ correctly [εὐσεβῶς] but, he adds, they have only done this to be cunning, or in fear of the emperor, rather than

34 *Basilakes* 57; Birkenmeier 2003, 98.

35 On Manuel's ecumenical initiatives with the Armenians, see: Magdalino 1993, 75–76, n. 189; also Nersessian 2001; Terian 2008.

36 Darrouzès 1990, 133.

37 Darrouzès 1990, 94–95.

38 The text is only preserved in one manuscript, Atheniensis Bibliothèque Nationale 375, ff. 234–237. Darrouzès 1990, 90, judges a later date as more likely, due to the content of the scribal additions across the manuscript.

39 Darrouzès 1990, 133.

because they actually believe it.[40] The scribe continues with a long tirade of anathemas aimed at the Armenians, most of which have little to do with the text concerned, and go so far as to condemn them for worshipping idols, and for *not* celebrating icons, in the same sentence.[41] For the purposes of establishing ecumenical relations under John, however, it would seem that the *katholikos* went to great pains to demonstrate his orthodoxy to the emperor, and that, if believed, this declaration of faith would have been accepted as orthodox. Manuel's later attempt at church union may have originated here, as Manuel was campaigning with his father in Cilicia at this time, and may have originally been destined to be the prince of the territory before the death of his elder brother.[42]

In addition to this letter, John is alleged to have removed Latin bishops from the sees of Tarsos and Marmistra and replaced them with "heretic bishops", according to Odo of Deuil, and also removed the Latin bishop of Anazarbos according to Nerses of Lampron.[43] However, unfortunately, neither Odo nor Nerses is specific as to whether the replacements were Greek, Melkite or Armenian. But, whichever the case, they would likely have been more palatable to and understanding of the Armenian Christians. As Manuel continued John's policies while he pushed for church unification between 1165–79, the fact that Nerses tells us about the appointment of these bishops, and himself became bishop of Tarsos in 1176, demonstrates that, even if John originally installed "Greek" bishops, by 1176 Manuel was appointing Armenians to those same sees.[44] The source for Michael the Syrian's knowledge of John's doings appears to have been a former Jacobite Bishop, Basil of Edessa, who was in John's retinue from at least 1122 onwards, as evidenced by Michael's knowledge of the defeat of the Pechenegs at the battle of Beroea in that year.[45] Thus, John appears to have had no problem with non-Chalcedonian Christians in his retinue communicating with their fellow clerics, and this brings us to one of many links between John and Edessa.

40 "δόλῳ τυχὸν ἢ φόβῳ τοῦ βασιλέως" (Darrouzès 1990, 145).

41 Darrouzès 1990, 145.

42 Kinnamos, *Epitome* (Meinike 1836, 22–23); *Kleinchroniken*, Chronik 6.2 (Schreiner 1975, 57–58).

43 Odo of Deuil (Berry 1948, 68–69). Odo's account of the Second Crusade is almost uniformly hostile to the Greeks, and so picks up any excuse to show them as heretics. Nerses of Lampron (1869, 577); Lilie 1993, 119.

44 See note 35 above.

45 Michael the Syrian 15.7 and 15.8 (Ibrahim 2009, 587 and 590; tr. Chabot 1963, 185 and 190); Spinei 2013, 195.

We do not know for whom Matthew wrote his chronicle, only that he wrote it in Edessa as a history of all Armenians.[46] Andrews uses the "highly complimentary" portrait of John II as a *terminus ante quem* for his writing of the third section of the Chronicle, but if, in fact, Matthew welcomed John's conquest as the fulfilment of Kozeṙn's prophecy, then it is entirely possible Matthew could have been writing contemporaneously with John's conquest.[47] What is more, a lesser known episode of John's eastern campaign brought him to the county of Edessa, where they may even have come into contact.

3 The Emperor in Edessa

The direct link between John and Edessa was made during negotiations at Antioch, where in addition to Raymond of Antioch swearing fealty to John and promising to hand over Antioch to him in exchange for Raymond being able to hold Aleppo and other Syrian cities as a perpetual fief once he and John conquered them together, John received the support of Edessa, with their troops becoming his.[48] This was particularly significant, as immediately after this meeting at Antioch in late 1137, Mohammed Danishmend came south from Anatolia to stake his own claim to Cilicia and Edessa.

William of Tyre, Choniates and Kinnamos relate that, following the submission of Antioch, John wintered near Tarsos in Cilicia before starting his campaign in Muslim Syria, and many scholars followed suit and deemed the overwintering irrelevant to the principal goal: the following year's campaign against the Muslims.[49] In fact, campaigns during the turn of 1137/8 were just as important as any of the operations yet carried out on the expedition, as it underlined not only John's position in Cilicia, but also Edessa. Additionally, John was brought into close proximity with Matthew, then writing in Edessa itself, whilst proving himself a saviour of the Armenians in the county.

---

46 Andrews outlines all the possible recipients, including both the Pahlawuni family who dominated the *katholikate*, and an Armenian named Vasil who governed Edessa in Joscelin's absence, as likely possibilities. Andrews 2017, 8–9.

47 Žamanakagrutʻiwn (Mēlikʻ-Adsmean and Tēr-Mikʻayēlean 1898, 346); Andrews 2017, 6–7, 154.

48 Choniates, *Historia* (van Dieten 1975, 27); Prodromos (Hörandner 1974, XI, line 168); William of Tyre, *Chron*. 14.30 (Huygens 1986, 671); Orderic Vitalis (Chibnall 1978, 502–509); Lilie 1993, 121–125; *Italikos* 260–261.

49 William of Tyre, *Chron*. 15.1 (Huygens 1986, 674); Choniates, *Historia* (van Dieten 1975, 27); Kinnamos, *Epitome* (Meinike 1836, 19); Harris 2007, 83; Magdalino 1993, 37–41; Parnell 2010, 153.

Though John had secured the Cilician coast before marching on Antioch, the mountains were still in Armenian hands, but their diminished state had not gone unnoticed by Mohammed Danishmend in late summer 1137. Mohammed had recently defeated his brothers and now sought to secure his position further through foreign campaigns, beginning with a number of raids against Byzantium while John was away.[50] A contemporary coin of his bears the legend: "Μέγας Μέλικις πάσης Ῥωμανίας καὶ Ἀνατολῆς" [Great Melik of all Romania and Anatolia/the East].[51] Such a claim thus not only encompassed all Anatolia, but also implied the lands of Mesopotamia and the Levant as well.

With such claims, the weakened remainder of Cilician Armenia would therefore be a tempting target after his civil war victory, alongside the lands of Marash that were then part of the County of Edessa. With Joscelin II's army only just returned from aiding King Fulk of Jerusalem, and possibly attending upon John in Antioch if Italikos and Choniates are to be believed, they too were an invitation to Mohammed.[52]

In the *Chronicle* of Matthew and Gregory the Priest, the dating for this campaign is muddled, which makes a strong case for these two entries being by different chroniclers, rather than both by Gregory, as Andrews suggests.[53] The 1137 entry, conventionally attributed to Matthew but assigned by Andrews to Gregory, relates that Mohammed invaded at the start of 1137, but also that John was already in the vicinity of Antioch devastating Muslim territory. The following entry, certainly by Gregory the Priest, relates how John went from Cilicia to Antioch, and thence to Shayzar in Syria, and then that Mohammed invaded, but uses no specific temporal phrases to specify when exactly this occurred. The contradiction can, however, be resolved by the timing of Baldwin's appeal to the emperor and his subsequent march north and the siege of Vakha. Lilie has pointed out that these events were exceptionally unlikely to have occurred after Shayzar, as John had to hurry back to Constantinople while fighting Ikonion en route, and yet must have taken place after John had resolved his differences with the Latins, and so could not have occurred during the initial Cilician campaign as Matthew's date implies.[54] Therefore the turn of 1137–8 is the most likely date for these developments, as John was in Cilicia with time and motive.

---

50 Michael the Syrian 16.9 (Ibrahim, 2009, 622; trans. Chabot 1963, 248).

51 Oikonomides 1983, 198, 201–202.

52 For Joscelin aiding Fulk against Zengi in the south, see William of Tyre, *Chron.* 14.24 and 14.26 (Huygens 1986, 663 and 666); Kinnamos, *Epitome* (Meinike 1836, 17).

53 *Matthew*, 238–239 and 241 respectively.

54 Lilie 1993, 118–119, n. 95 and 125, n. 117.

Mohammed is said to have burned villages and monasteries, devastated orchards and cut off water supplies to the town of Kesoun and then encamped nearby to await its surrender.[55] Matthew tells us that Baldwin, lord of Marash and Kesoun and vassal of Joscelin, had begged John for aid, and so after his short stay in Antioch, John was once again on the march north to prove himself a just overlord who could protect his new Latin clients.[56] Coupled with this, there was the still unconquered Armenian stronghold of Vakha. Thus John could kill two birds with one stone with an autumn campaign, further confirming his legitimacy to rule over Latins and Armenians.[57]

The 1137 entry in the *Chronicle* tells us that, on the mere word that the emperor was coming, Mohammed withdrew north, seemingly unwilling to face the emperor in battle.[58] Gregory the Priest, in the following entry, does not make the link between John's march and the Danishmendid withdrawal, only telling us Mohammed failed to take the fortress of Shuplsa and therefore retreated, conforming to his prejudice against John in favour of Armenian self-determination.[59] Lilie suggests that the major part of John's army then went to winter quarters in Tarsus, but that divisions laid siege to Vakha, and perhaps Kapniskerti (Geben).[60] Kapniskerti guarded one of the major passes through the mountains, and its conquest would have earned John kudos from the Armenians as it would have secured the pass against Mohammed, and fulfilled Kozeṙn's prophecy by driving the Persians from Armenian lands.[61] On the other hand, the capture of Vakha, involving a Homeric duel between an

55 *Matthew*, 238.

56 *Matthew*, 239.

57 Baldwin of Bouillon may have acted as an imperial agent in the foundation of the county of Edessa, implying continued imperial interests: Frankopan 2012, 150–153.

58 *Matthew*, 239.

59 *Matthew*, 241; unidentified site, Edwards 1987, 40.

60 Kinnamos describes how this took place on John's return west, but it would seem unlikely for John to have used his exhausted army after Shayzar, when the Danishmendids were pressing his Anatolian frontier. John had his army in the right place with the right amount of time to seize these castles at this time, and it happens to conform with every source except Kinnamos: Kinnamos, *Epitome* (Meinike 1836, 20); Lilie 1993, 125, n. 117. Ibn al-Adim notes how John attempted to lull the Syrian Muslims into a false sense of security with an attack on the Armenians, but this is uncorroborated and may simply show Ibn al-Adim rhetorically demonstrating Roman treachery (Ibn al-Adim 1884, 674). Choniates notes how John attacked Vakha after all other fortresses were taken, and how John said he would be happy to lay siege to the city until snow fell upon him, implying this time of year: Choniates, *Historia* (van Dieten 1975, 21–2). Ibn Al-Athir places this campaign at this exact time, in accordance with *Matthew* and Gregory the Priest: Ibn al-Athir, *Chron.* (Richard 2006, 337).

61 *Gesta Francorum* (Hill 1962, 25–27); Edwards 1987, 124–129, n. 7.

Armenian and imperial champion that takes pride of place in Choniates, is barely mentioned by Matthew.[62] This aligns with Andrews' view that Matthew omits events that do not follow his historical plan: in this case, that John was the rightful overlord of the Armenians and that heroic resistance was therefore contrary to the position of the Armenians as part of the empire.

With Mohammed driven off, and the northern passes into Cilicia secure against his return, John had shown himself a worthy protector of his new Armenian and Latin subjects. In addition, he overcame the last Armenian resistance. Leon was captured, apparently having acknowledged that he could never have continued, caught as he was between Franks and Turks.[63] Ibn al-Athir adds that Leon offered John vast sums of money and agreed to be his subject, and so some form of agreement may have been made, but this is also uncorroborated.[64]

This campaign was an essential part of the activities of an emperor consolidating his role as imperial overlord of both Armenian Cilicia and Latin/Armenian Edessa, whilst dealing a blow to Mohammed Danishmend. His use of at least one population transfer, a conciliatory attitude towards the Armenian Church, and the ability to bring stability to the province explains how he was able to accomplish so much in so short a time. This would have earned the support of many Armenians and, I argue, of Matthew of Edessa. Ibn al-Adim relates that John spent the rest of the winter between Anazarbos, Adana, and all over "little Armenia". Thus John may well have toured his new domains extensively that winter to organise their administration and bond with the nobles, a particular necessity as John was not re-instating their native ruler.[65] Though there is no visit to Edessa mentioned either in this winter or when John returned in 1142–3, the emperor spent some time in Armenian Cilicia and so would have been a major presence for Matthew, were he still alive. The fact that John died in a hunting accident in Cilicia again suggests integration with the local nobility. Matthew could have been exposed to the court rhetoric, which would explain their echoes in Kozeṙn's prophecy.[66]

---

62 Choniates, *Historia* (van Dieten 1975, 21–25). The capture is also mentioned with no details by Kinnamos, *Epitome* (Meinike 1836, 20); Gregory the Priest (Dostourian 1993, 241); Smbat Sparapet, *Chronique* (Dédéyan 1980, 53). The latter two mention Leon being finally captured there. Edwards 1987, 259–265.

63 Choniates mentions how he immediately escaped, but then was captured again: Choniates, *Historia* (van Dieten 1975, 25); *Matthew*, 239; Gregory the Priest (Dostourian 1993, 241); Smbat Sparapet, *Chronique* (Dédéyan 1980, 53). Ibn al-Adim 1884, 674.

64 Ibn al-Athir, *Chron.* (Richard 2006, 337).

65 Ibn al-Adim 1884, 674.

66 See note 70 below in particular.

4 The Prophesied Emperor

Though the parallels with Kozeŀn's prophecy might suggest invention by Matthew, in fact many of the themes are long standing tropes in such texts. In particular, the prophecy shares much in theme and language with the late seventh-century *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodios*, with the only clear additions being the sixty years of Turkish oppression followed by the recapture of Jerusalem.[67] The idea of the "Last World Emperor" is a longstanding one in apocalyptic literature, and it is one with characteristics either that John was consciously imitating, or that Matthew chose to promote in such a way that contemporaries could not fail to make the connection between the two. Elements of Kozeŀn's prophecy, such as the size of the emperor's army, his success against the "Persians", his taking of captives and treasures from them, his building campaign in Cilicia and general assumption of rule in the region, fit the events of John's 1137–1139 campaign neatly.

The "fearful multitude like sand on the shore of the sea", the army gathered by John was by all accounts the largest put together during his reign. Requiring most of a year's preparation, it consisted of contingents from multiple peoples he had subjugated up to that point, such as Pecheneg nomads, Turks, Serbs and Latins, in addition to Romans.[68] Its size was such that John divided it into separate armies during the campaign and, when he considered visiting Jerusalem in 1143, an embassy of three high-profile Latins from the kingdom requested he bring only 10,000 men as a bodyguard.[69] In annexing Cilicia, and by defending Edessa from Mohammed, John could be considered to be driving the "Persians" beyond the Gihon River, by any definition of its location.

Significantly, however, the many court orations and poems evoke images similar to Matthew's of the Roman king being "inflamed by fire", with Prodromos in particular using large sections of his orations to make the analogy.[70] Again, this similarity may be a trope, but it was a popular one at John's court long before he came east, and one that Matthew may have come

67 Pseudo-Methodios: Reinink 1992, 149–152; Thomson 2001, 97; MacEvitt 2007, 158; Andrews 2017, 30–36.

68 William of Tyre, *Chron*. 14.24 (Huygens 1986, 662).

69 Choniates, *Historia* (van Dieten 1975, 29–30); *Italikos* 251, 258–9; William of Tyre, *Chron*. 15.21 (Huygens 1986, 703).

70 Prodromos (Hörandner 1974, VII, line 16; XV, line 16; XVI, lines 2–3, 97–108, 192–201; XVII, lines 133–150, 165, 197–200, 209, 314–320; XIX, line 175; XXIX, lines 8–11). Tzetzes 1972, Poem 1, line 4. Conversely, Basilakes' *Cilician Oration* remarks on John's generosity in quenching his fires and treating the Cilicians and Isaurians well. Italikos mentions how various fire throwing machines were used against Anazarbos (*Italikos* 254–255).

across through contacts such as Basil of Edessa. Furthermore, both historical and contemporary court sources are lyrical in the listing of treasures and captives taken during John's campaigns in general, as well as his eastern one in particular. Accordingly, even when Matthew was writing the earlier stages of his history, he would have been well aware not only of John's army, but also of his ability to take both captives and treasures from the Persians.

The most spectacular example of such acquisitions was John's triumph of 1133, and there are multiple court poems and expansive histories extolling the number of captives and treasures taken and presented in Constantinople during this ceremony.[71] During the Syrian campaign, John secured a great deal of treasure from Shayzar, including a cross of Parian marble supposedly commissioned by Constantine, together with a sumptuous table, both of which were part of the loot seized from the tent of Romanos IV Diogenes at the battle of Manzikert.[72] There were also well-bred horses and other herd animals, silks, and captives, in addition to the promise of an annual payment.[73] Thus, just as with the fire analogies, John's actions were closely imitating Kozeṙn's prophecy, whether by accident or design.

John's immediate building programme following his conquest also aligned with the prophecy, in particular in the region east of Seleukeia that linked Cilicia by land to the rest of the empire, where there are five chapels. One contains the same masonry as the fort around it (Kızılcaşehir), suggesting John built that as well; the other chapels can be found in two forts (Antiocheia-ad-Cragum and Kalanoros), one town citadel (Syedra), and a port (Iotape), indicating that they were garrisoned by imperial troops after John's campaign.[74] The occupation of these sites would have constituted a statement of renewed imperial control of the region, as well as being of practical use for the logistics of transporting men and materials by land and sea to Cilicia and Syria in the future.[75] It is also notable that the orations on John's Cilician campaign make

71 Prodromos (Hörandner 1974, III, IV, V and VI); Choniates, *Historia* (van Dieten 1975, 19); Kinnamos, *Epitome* (Meinike 1836, 13); Lau 2014, 195–214; Magdalino 2016.

72 Choniates, *Historia* (van Dieten 1975, 30–31); Kinnamos, *Epitome* (Meinike 1836, 20); *Italikos* 264–265.

73 *Basilakes* 71; Prodromos (Hörandner 1974, XI, lines 177–180, 191–200); Ibn-Munquidh uses the analogy that Salah-al-Din once pillaged two castles, "as if he were plundering Romans", implying that when the Romans pillaged, they seized a lot of plunder: Usama Ibn-Munqidh (Cobb 2008, 172).

74 Antiocheia-ad-Cragum: Huber 1967, 21; Deluigi 2015, 123; Kalanoros: Redford 2000, 14–15; Krabbenhöft 2011, 51–52; Deluigi 2015, 74–75; Syedra and Iotape: Huber 1967, 38; Redford 2000, 19; Deluigi 2015, 123; Kızılcaşehir: Redford 2000, 16–18; Doğan 2006, 65; Deluigi 2015, 75–76.

75 See Lau 2016a.

a point of his capture of the small port of Korykos further east on the Cilician coast, in addition to the major port of Tarsus, and Ibn Al-Athir notes that John rebuilt the port of Alexandretta near Antioch, thus creating a network of ports for facilitating future campaigns, and further integrating these new provinces.[76] Again, such a building campaign would not have gone unmarked by those who knew the prophecy.

5 Conclusion

Andrews notes that, while Basil II is acclaimed as the "father of the Armenian nation" by Matthew, subsequent Armeno-Byzantine relations, the absorption of the independent Armenian states by successive emperors, and then their failure to defend those kingdoms from the Turks, meant that Matthew's good opinion was forfeit.[77] Equally, by the late 1130s and 1140s when Matthew wrote his last entries, Cilicia was slowly moving into the Latin orbit, as demonstrated by the synod of Jerusalem in 1142. Though some Armenians undoubtedly supported closer ties with the Latins, it is also apparent that some Armenians and Latins in fact supported imperial hegemony. Matthew himself, living in the late 1130s in Edessa, would have found himself in a land increasingly under the imperial aegis. Mohammed's invasion and John's subsequent joint campaign with Raymond and Joscelin suggested a new Byzantine hegemony was imminent. Andrews' thesis, in which the prophecies of Kozeṙn shape Matthew's intended message of history, thus finds its natural conclusion in the identification of John as the most likely candidate for the prophecy. The emperor was literally fulfilling the prophecy as Matthew completed that section of the *Chronicle*. Though we cannot be certain of Matthew's authorship here, it does fit the evidence. More than this, it should be acknowledged that there was a faction of Armenians who supported imperial rule in this period, whom John deliberately cultivated to secure that rule. Equally, Manuel's efforts at church unification later in the century were prefigured by early actions of John's while Manuel was in his company. With Matthew's and John's deaths, both the prophecy and John's plans became merely wishful thinking, but they represent a time capsule of future history wherein the empire truly restored itself to its ascendancy before the eleventh-century crises brought it low, giving us a vision of

76 Ibn al-Athir, *Chron.* (Richard 2006, 337); *Italikos* 251, nn. 28–32; Ramsay 1972, 356; Korykos is also the major fortress on the road between Seleukeia and Tarsus: Edwards 1987, 161–167; Hild and Hellenkemper 1990, 191.

77 Andrews 2017, 179–181.

how many contemporaries saw the correct ordering of the world even in the mid 12th century.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

Basilakes, Nikephoros (1984) Ed. A. Garzya, *Nicephori Basilacae Orationes et Epistolae.* Bibliotheca scriptorum Graecorum et Romanorum Teubneriana (Leipzig).

Choniates, Niketas (1975) Ed. J. van Dieten, *Nicetae Choniatae Historia.* CFHB 11, 2 vols (Berlin).

Gesta Francorum et Aliorum Hierosolimitanorum (1962) Ed. and trans. R. Hill, *The Deeds of the Franks and the Other Pilgrims to Jerusalem* (London).

Gregory the Priest (1993) 'Continuation of Matthew of Edessa', Trans. A. Dostourian, *Armenia and the Crusades: Tenth to Twelfth Centuries: The Chronicle of Matthew of Edessa* (Belmont, MA).

Ibn al-Adim (1884) 'Extraits de la Chronique d'Alep', *RHC Historiens orientaux*, vol. 3 (Paris), 577–690.

Ibn al-Athir (2006) Trans. D. S. Richard, *The Chronicle of Ibn al-Athir for the Crusading Period from* al-Kamil fi'l-ta'rikh *Part 1* (Aldershot).

Italikos, Michael (1972) Ed. P. Gautier, *Lettres et Discours* (Paris).

Kinnamos (1836) Ed. A. Meinike, *Ioannis Cinnami Epitome rerum ab Ioanne et Alexio Comnenis gestarum* (Bonn).

Kleinchroniken (1975) Ed. P. Schreiner, *Die byzantinischen Kleinchroniken*, vol. 1 (Vienna).

Matt'ēos Uṙhayec'I (1898) Eds M. Mēlik'-Adsmean and N. Tēr-Mik'ayēlean, *Žamanakagrut'iwn* (Vałaršapat).

Matthew of Edessa [=Matt'ēos Uṙhayec'I] (2017) Trans. T. Andrews, *Matt'ēos Uṙhayec'i and His Chronicle: History as Apocalypse in a Crossroads of Cultures* (Leiden).

Michael the Syrian (2009) Ed. G. Y. Ibrahim, *Text and Translations of the Chronicle of Michael the Great, vol. 1: The Edessa-Aleppo Syriac Codex of the Chronicle of Michael the Great*, English text summary by S. Brock (New Jersey). Trans. J. P. Chabot (1963) *Chronique de Michel le Syrien, Patriarche Jacobite d'Antioche* (*1166–1199*) (Brussels).

Nerses of Lampron (1869) 'Reflections sur les institutions de l'église et explication du mystère de la messe', *RHC Documents Arméniens* 1, 569–578.

Odo of Deuil (1948) Ed. V. Berry, *De profectione Ludovici VII in orientem* (New York).

Orderic Vitalis (1978) Ed. M. Chibnall, *The Ecclesiastical History of Orderic Vitalis*, vol. VI: Book XIII. Oxford Medieval Texts (Oxford).

Prodromos, Theodore (1974) Ed. W. Hörandner, *Theodore Prodromos: historische Gedichte* (Vienna).

Smbat Sparapet (1980) Trans. G. Dédéyan, *La Chronique attribuée au connectable Smbat* (Paris).

Tzetzes, John (1972) Ed. P. Leone, *Ioannes Tzetzes, Epistulae* (Leipzig).

Usama Ibn-Munqidh (2008) Trans. P. M. Cobb, *The Book of Contemplation. Islam and the Crusades* (London).

William of Tyre (1986) Ed. R. B. C. Huygens, *Willelmi Tyrensiis Archiepiscopi Chronicon* (Turnhout).

Manuscripts

Atheniensis Bibliothèque Nationale 375, ff. 234–237.

Secondary Sources

Birkenmeier, J. (2003) *The Development of the Komnenian Army 1081–1204* (Leiden).

Bromiley, G. (ed.) (1979–1988) *The International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia* (Grand Rapids, MI).

Darrouzès, J. (1990) 'Trois Documents de la Controverse Gréco-Arménienne', *Revue des Études Byzantines* 48, 89–153.

Dédéyan, G. (2003) *Les Arméniens entre Grecs, Musulmans et Croisés*, 2 vols. (Lisbon).

Deluigi, H. (2015) *Winter in the Land of Rûm: Defenses against the Turks in Western Anatolia* (unpublished Masters diss., İhsan Doğramacı Bilkent University).

Doğan, S. (2006) 'Byzantine Surveys in and around Alanya in 2005', *AnMed: Anadolu Akdenizi Arkeoloji Haberleri* 4, 65–70.

Edwards, R. (1987) *The Fortifications of Armenian Cilicia* (Washington DC).

Frankopan, P. (2012) *The First Crusade. The Call From the East* (London).

Ghazarian, J. (2000) *The Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia during the Crusades. The Integration of Cilician Armenians with the Latins* (Richmond).

Harris, J. (2007) *Byzantium and the Crusades* (London).

Hild, F. and Hellenkemper, H (1990) (eds) *Kilikien und Isaurien, Tabula Imperii Byzantini* 5 (Vienna).

Hovannisian, R. and Payaslian, S. (eds) (2008) *Armenian Cilicia* (Costa Mesa).

Huber, G. (1967) *A Survey of Coastal Cities in Western Cilicia* (Ankara).

Krabbenhöft, N. (2011) 'A Veneer of Power: Thirteenth-Century Seljuk Frescoes on the Walls of Alanya and Some Recommendations for their Preservation', Unpublished Masters diss. Koç University (Istanbul).

Lau, M. (2014) 'The Power of Poetry—Portraying the expansion of the empire under John II Komnenos', in M. Lau, C. Franchi and M. Di Rodi (eds) *Landscapes of Power—Selected Papers from the XV Oxford University Byzantine Society International Graduate Conference* (Oxford).

Lau, M. (2016a) 'The Naval Reform of Emperor John II Komnenos: A Re-evaluation', *Mediterranean Historical Review* 31.2, 115–138.

Lau, M. (2016b) 'Rewriting the 1120s: Chronology and Crisis under John II Komnenos', in *Making and Remaking Byzantium*: Limes Plus *Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities* (Belgrade), 87–108.

Lilie, R-J. (1993) *Byzantium and the Crusades, 1096–1204* (Oxford).

MacEvitt, C. (2007) 'The Chronicle of Matthew of Edessa: Apocalypse, the First Crusade, and the Armenian Diaspora', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 61 (2007), 157–181.

MacEvitt, C. (2008) *The Crusades and the Christian World of the East* (Philadelphia).

Magdalino, P. (1993) *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos 1143–1180* (Cambridge).

Magdalino, P. (2016) 'The Triumph of 1133', in A. Bucossi and A. Rodriguez-Suarez (eds) *John II Komnenos, Emperor of Byzantium. In the Shadow of Father and Son* (Abingdon), 53–70.

Nersessian, V. (2001) 'Armenian-Byzantine Church Relations at the time of the Cilician Kingdom', *Treasures from the Ark: 1700 Years of Armenian Christian Art* (London), 48–51.

Nicolle, D. (2007) *Crusader Warfare 1: Byzantium, Western Europe and the Battle for the Holy Land* (London).

Oikonomides, N. (1983) 'Les Danishmendides, entre Byzance, Bagdad, et le Sultanat d'Iconium', *Revue Numismatique* 6 (25), 189–207.

Parnell, D. (2010) 'John II Comnenus and Crusader Antioch', in T. Madden, J. Naus, and V. Ryan (eds) *Crusades—Medieval Worlds in Conflict* (Farnham), 149–157.

Ramsay, W. (1972) *The Historical Geography of Asia Minor* (New York).

Redford, S. (2000) *Landscape and the State in Medieval Anatolia: Seljuk Gardens and Pavilions of Alanya, Turkey* (Oxford).

Reinink, G. (1992) 'Ps. Methodius' Concept of History', in A. Cameron and L. Conrad (eds) *The Byzantine and Early Islamic Near East I: Problems in the Literary Source Material* (Princeton), 149–187.

Spinei, V. (2013) 'An Oriental Perspective on the Ethnic Realities of the Balkans in the Eleventh–Twelfth Centuries: Michael the Syrian', *Archivum Eurasiae Medii Aevi* 20, 165–238.

Terian, A (2008) 'To Byzantium with Love: The Overtures of Saint Nerses the Gracious', in R. Hovannisian and S. Payaslian (eds) *Armenian Cilicia* (Costa Mesa), 131–152.

Thomson, R. (2001) 'The Concept of "History" in Medieval Armenian Historians', in A. Eastmond (ed.) *Eastern Approaches to Byzantium* (Aldershot), 89–99.

PART 3

Dreams and Memory in Byzantine Chronicles and Encomia

∴

CHAPTER 9

Dreams and Imaginative Memory in Select Byzantine Chronicles

Roger Scott

The role and treatment of dreams and visions in Byzantine chronicles is an area of dream studies that in general has not as yet aroused much interest. Two distinguished exceptions to this are George Calofonos and Paul Magdalino, Calofonos with a chapter on dreams in Theophanes[1] and each with a chapter (among other studies) in the 2014 publication entitled *Dreaming in Byzantium and Beyond*.[2] There Calofonos and Magdalino concentrate on middle to late Byzantium, Calofonos on the tenth-century continuation of Theophanes,[3] while Magdalino extends this through to the 14th century.[4] So here I shall look at the sixth-century Malalas, whom neither Calofonos nor Magdalino mention as he falls outside their timeframe, the ninth-century Theophanes (taking an approach and looking at material that occurs outside the framework of Calofonos' earlier excellent study), and the eleventh-century Skylitzes and Kedrenos, since Skylitzes is scarcely mentioned by either, and Kedrenos not at all. What I shall suggest (rather than demonstrate) is that, although the acceptance of divine advice via dreams remains constant across the period, there are developments in how this is portrayed in chronicle narratives along with a growing awareness of the problems of dream interpretation, which perhaps parallels the growth in dream-interpretation handbooks across the same period. But I also remain conscious that a preliminary study of four chroniclers writing across half a millennium, although it may reveal a genuine trend, is not adequate to demonstrate the existence of that trend, the appearance of which may well be better explained by other factors.

Magdalino begins with a question:[5]

1 Calofonos 2010, 133–144.
2 Angelidi and Calofonos 2014: Calofonos 2014; Magdalino 2014.
3 Calofonos 2014.
4 Magdalino 2014.
5 Magdalino 2014, 125.

© KONINKLIJKE BRILL NV, LEIDEN, 2018 | DOI:10.1163/9789004375710_011

> What can be learned about Byzantine dream culture from the works of Byzantine historians? On first impression, the answer would seem to be, not much. Dream narratives and mentions of dreams occupy very little space in the voluminous pages of Byzantine historical literature. Some texts contain none at all; a significant number record only one dream, while of those that narrate more than three, all but two works achieve this statistic mainly with material drawn from earlier texts including, of course, the Bible.

So that is not a promising start for my chosen topic. And three of my four chosen chroniclers confirm Magdalino's picture, though their statistics are rather better, if only by comparison.[6] The first nine books of Malalas (that is, the whole period from Creation to the Annunciation) contain a total of just eleven (six dreams and five visions), and these are mainly well known myth or bible stories that Malalas could scarcely have excluded from his chronicle.[7] There are another ten across Malalas' next nine books from the Incarnation to 565 CE, so maintaining the same low average of just over one per book,[8] with occasional other items that might arguably qualify, such as Jewish priests hearing a hidden voice from the inner temple saying "We are departing from here", eighteen years after Christ's Ascension.[9] Again, several of these are well known events such as the vision of the star guiding the magi and Constantine's visionary dream of the Cross with its inscription "By this conquer!". Theophanes

6 I am omitting the chronicle of Symeon Logothete since it omits dreams and visions virtually entirely, confirming Magdalino's picture.

7 Dreams at Malalas 2.6 (Thurn 21, ByzA 4 [2.7], 14 [Argives looking for Io]); 3.8 (Thurn 43, ByzA 4 [3.6], 29 [Joseph]); 3.9 (Thurn 44, ByzA 4 [3.7], 30 [Endymion's dream]); 4.9 (Thurn 56, ByzA 4 [4.13], 38 [Constantine's dream]); 5.35 (Thurn 109, ByzA 4 [5.65], 74 [Iphigeneia's dream]); 6.19 (Thurn 126, ByzA 4, 86 [Sychaios in Dido's dream]). Visions at 2.12 (Thurn 27, ByzA 4 [2.20], 19 [ball of thunder]); 2.16 (Thurn 33, ByzA 4 [2.29], 22 [Theoboos' vision of Antiope]); 4.9 (Thurn 55, ByzA 4, [4.13] 38 [Argonauts' vision of apparition]); 5.14 (Thurn 83, ByzA 4 [5.45], 58 [sign to Trojans at Apollo's altar]); 6.3 (Thurn 118, ByzA 4, 80 [vision of Nebuchadnezzor to Daniel]).

8 Malalas, *Chron.* 10.4 (Thurn 174–5, ByzA 4, 122 [star guiding magi]); 10.14 (Thurn 182, ByzA 4, 127 [Pontius Pilate's wife's dream]); 10.41 (Thurn 195, ByzA 4, 137 [Emperor Galba dreams about burying holy apostles]); 13.2 (Thurn 243, ByzA 4, 172 [Constantine's dream of seeing the Cross]); 13.19 and 23 (Thurn 251 and 256, ByzA 4, 178 and 181 [Julian's dream of dying in Asia and its fulfilment]); 13.25 (Thurn 257, ByzA 4, 181 [Basil's dream predicting Julian's death]); 13.28 (Thurn 260, ByzA 4, 184 [Julian's vision of Valentinian as his successor]); 14. 27 (Thurn 288, ByzA 4, [14.26–27] 200 [Theodosius' vision via St. John that Marcian would succeed him]); 16.20 (Thurn 334–335, ByzA 4, 229 [Anastasios' and Amantios' dreams, interpreted as foretelling their deaths]).

9 Malalas, *Chron.* 10.26 (Thurn 187, ByzA 4, 131).

has thirteen dreams in his 500 pages[10] and Skylitzes eleven, with two others that I exclude for reasons given below.[11] Overall that is not a strong showing, although Kedrenos, to whom we shall return, has decidedly more dreams and visions and so complicates the picture.[12]

Magdalino does, however, then add: "Yet the incidence of dreams in historical narratives, and the types of dreams they narrate, afford some insight into the role of dreams in the Byzantine conception of history."[13] It is here that Magdalino and Calofonos have both pointed to dreams having a significance in chronicles that far exceeds their frequency, and have done so convincingly, with Calofonos arguing that: "It is not their authenticity or originality that makes them interesting, but their effectiveness within the wider narratives to which they belong, as well as their potential as narratives within their own right".[14] Here Calofonos rightly points out that dreams belong to "the wider repertoire of the bizarre and the supernatural, which informs historical narrative in Late Antiquity. Together with prophecies, earthquakes, comets, abnormalities and other signs, dreams were viewed as bearers of messages from the divine world."[15] But having pointed that out properly, Calofonos understandably does not give this wider repertoire much emphasis in his treatment since his stated object is to concentrate just on dreams. So (in line with Calofonos' more general point) I stress that dreams in historical narrative need to be seen in the context of these other phenomena to enrich the total narrative; that is, there are many signs of divine interference in human affairs that are not always explained. God is not a great communicator; he just signals dissatisfaction (notably through earthquakes, eclipses and comets) without indicating where that dissatisfaction lies, and we humans are not particularly good at interpreting God's opaque warning signs until it is too late. But those signs still shape the Byzantines' interpretation of history which needs to be remembered as we

10 Listed and discussed in Calofonos 2010, 143–144 and n. 29.

11 Skylitzes' dreams (references are given by name of emperor, chapter number in Wortley 2010, section (as in Thurn 1973 and Wortley 2010) and line number in Thurn 1973): (Leo V) chapter 2 section 9 line 73; (Leo V) 2.9.86; (Michael III) 5.22.7; (Michael III) 5.22.20; (Basil I) 6.4.19; (Basil I) 6.5.37; (John I) 15.17.21; (Basil II, Constantine VIII) 16.2.32; (Basil II, Constantine VIII) 16.47.14; (Michael IV) 19.4.83; (Michael IV) 19.6.53. The two omitted references are (Constantine VII) 9.2.41; (Michael IV) 19.23.36 both of which Magdalino 2014, 141 also omits. Of those that I accept, Magdalino, who "omits mentions of dreams whose visual content is not specified" (Magdalino 2014, 129), leaves out from his Skylitzes list both Leo V; both Michael III; both Basil I; (Michael IV) 19.4.83; and (Michael IV) 19.23.45.

12 Too numerous for a footnote so listed in the Appendix.

13 Magdalino 2014, 125.

14 Calofonos 2014, 97.

15 Calofonos 2010, 134–135.

read the hundreds of pages where there is no apparent sign of divine intervention. As Efthymiadis has pointed out in reviewing *Dreaming in Byzantium and Beyond*, "their role in the narrative of these texts is pivotal in that they can prolong the story and orient it towards a different denouement".[16]

Although Constantine's vision of the Cross and its inscription, "By this, conquer!", is arguably the most important vision of the Christian era, other seemingly insignificant sightings do play just as an important a part in Byzantine historical narratives. For example there is the ordinary jug of water that, in Julian the Apostate's final year, fermented and turned into sweet wine, thus heralding better times with Julian's imminent demise.[17] The fact that Theophanes (whose source here is unknown, suggesting he went searching for extra material) felt a need to record this amid a collection of similar oddities that supposedly heralded Julian's downfall shows his need to draw attention to divine intervention in history that is almost as important as Constantine's vision. Later chroniclers, Pseudo-Symeon[18] and Kedrenos,[19] also include Theophanes' story of the water jug, giving it the same stress as they do for Constantine's vision. Dreams on their own do not occupy much space, but if they are added to these other phenomena, the significance of the combined total of strange signs is easier to acknowledge and a reader of a Byzantine chronicle needs always to be aware of this, even when the material appears to be operating at a purely human level.

What, however, needs emphasising is that this divine presence in chronicles increases considerably as time goes on, while there is perhaps also an increasing recognition of the problems of interpretation. Malalas in the 6th century limits God's presence but has no doubts about interpretation; and although he is certainly skilled at building up a story, he makes little attempt to do so with dreams (apart from his treatment of Anastasios' death, to be looked at later). Dreams and visions are treated as just ordinary statements of fact. By the early 9th century Theophanes quite markedly increases God's presence, as well as discussing his own personal experience of a miracle. But he is also able to show his awareness of deceptive dreams by enthusiastically narrating a distinguished lie about a vision that enables him to portray Islam as a sham, which he of course exploits for his narrative as fully as he can (to be discussed later). It is the eleventh-century chronicler Skylitzes, however, who is much more aware both of fraud and of humankind's difficulties in interpreting God's

16 Efthymiadis 2015.
17 Theophanes, *Chron.* AM 5855 (de Boor 1883, 53).
18 Ps-Sym., *Chron.* 94r.6–13.
19 Kedrenos, *SynHist.* 323.3 (Tartaglia 2016, 535).

opaque warning signs. His successor, Kedrenos, incorporates Skylitzes' entire chronicle to conclude his narrative. While for the most part he accepts the authenticity of dreams and visions without question, he also provides both a lengthy reminder of the problem of interpretation and a note on the difficulty of understanding God's seemingly inconsistent approach to interference in human affairs (discussed below).

1 Malalas[20]

To begin with Malalas, his inclusion of dreams, as already mentioned, is rare. But the ones that are recorded are not treated as though they were anything special. They are just normal events that do not play a notable part in the direction of history. For the supernatural there is rather more emphasis on those who have mystic knowledge or are involved in mystic practices, especially in his BC period. In the AD period his dreams and visions are likewise not numerous, just nine in 565 years, but some are certainly related to major events, beginning with the star that guided the magi, and the various signs associated with the Resurrection and Christ's Ascension. After that, dreams and visions are absent until Constantine the Great.

In Malalas, Constantine's vision of the Cross in the sky and its inscription takes place only in a dream at night during a campaign against unidentified "barbarians" with simply no mention of either Maxentius or the Milvian bridge. So the treatment is very brief and the context unusual (shall we say), but it is placed in a significant position at the very beginning of Book 13. Elsewhere I have suggested that Malalas' outline structure of World History is tripartite, with six books each on what could be summed up as Jerusalem, Rome and Constantinople, so Book 13 opens a new stage.[21] Malalas virtually skips the next reign of Constantius to make the pagan Julian in effect Constantine's successor in narrative terms. Julian's reign opens with him dreaming that he is fated to die in Asia (13.19 Thurn 251), and closes when after a further dream the

20 While there is no doubt that Malalas lived in the 6th century, the peculiarities of the surviving text in Oxford *Baroccianus* 182 have in recent years led to suggestions that the text be considered as a multi-authored work from various centuries or even as a tenth- or eleventh-century work. For discussion see Jeffreys 2016 who, however, concludes by noting that she has "constantly been struck by the extent to which a personality could be perceived behind, within and through the text to which this name is attached". That is sufficient for my purposes to continue counting Malalas as a sixth-century author.

21 Scott 1994, 61, reprint in Scott 2012 as study 15, with another structure essentially being nine books each to cover BCE and CE.

fatally-wounded Julian is told that the local town is called Asia.[22] That same night St Basil in Cappadocian Caesarea saw in a dream both Christ ordering St Mercurius to kill Julian and later Mercurius reporting this had happened, all of which Basil duly reported to his clergy the next morning. All this looks like simple reporting of supposed fact, although Malalas' concluding statement of the account is that "the learned chronicler Eutropius did not agree with some of these details in his account".[23] That last statement, however, most probably applies to his entire account of Julian rather than specifically to St. Basil's dream. Book 13 has one further vision at the outset of Valentinian's reign where the vision had informed Julian that Valentinian would rule after him, so Julian had dispatched Valentinian to Selymbria. Again, it seems, just a simple statement of fact, so the few dreams associated with Julian are really not worthy of further comment, although it does make Book 13 Malalas' most dreamy book and also helps validate the next dream.

That next dream, where St John tells Theodosius II that Marcian would succeed him,[24] is intriguing for its inclusion in Malalas' narrative. There is not space here to explain how poor were Marcian's credentials for succeeding Theodosius II as emperor in 451, but poor they certainly were and presumably prompted Marcian's need to circulate as best he could a series of unlikely stories to show that he was in fact God's choice as Theodosius' successor. So there is one story where Marcian, after being acquitted of murdering a Roman soldier, only got his place in the Roman army as that soldier's replacement whose name was, providentially, Augustus.[25] And there are also two quite separate protective eagle stories, one when Marcian had fallen behind his regiment as a result of sickness and the other as Geiseric's prisoner-of-war in Vandal Africa (so neither story helping enhance his dubious military reputation), where in each case an eagle had spread its wings over a sleeping Marcian, protecting him from the midday sun.[26] All these stories Malalas rejects by omission, seemingly recognising how dubious they were for inclusion in a history, even though they were accepted by such reputable Byzantine historians as Procopius and Evagrius Scholastikos as well as by the chronicler Theophanes, all probably following Eustathios of Epiphaneia whom Warren Treadgold has now assured

22 Mal. *Chron.*, 13.23, Thurn 256, ByzA 4, 181.

23 Mal. *Chron.*, 13.25 (Thurn 257, ByzA 4, 182).

24 Mal. *Chron.*, 14.27 (Thurn 288, ByzA 4 [14.26], 200–201).

25 Evagrius, *Ecclesiastical History* 2.1 (Bidez-Parmentier 26–27, Whitby 57–58).

26 Procopius, *BV* 1.4.1–11 (Haury and Wirth 1962, 324–326); Theophanes, AM 5943 (de Boor 104).

us "was one of the most learned and sophisticated historians Byzantium ever produced" and whom Malalas certainly also used (but rather more sensibly than his better acclaimed fellow historians and chroniclers).[27] Instead Malalas keeps just a story of Theodosius making a special visit to Ephesus to consult St John the theologian about his successor and being advised in a dream (ἐν ὁράματι) that it would be Marcian.[28] What is remarkable here is that even though Marcian's propaganda stories were accepted by respectable classicising historians, the more prudent chronicler Malalas rejects them apart from the story that involves a dream. That surely emphasises not merely that dreams were accepted as a reliable indicator of God communicating with mankind but also that they were superior to some other supposed indicators (such as the eagle stories) that were subject to human manipulation. In particular, it is worth noting the rejection of the protective eagle stories as they have quite a future (see below) in manipulating Byzantine memory of the past.

The only other dreams in the chronicle are those of Anastasios and his *cubicularius* in 518 at the end of Book 16 where they are told that, because of their sins, they would die soon with 14 years removed from Anastasios' lifespan.[29] So their two dreams were almost certainly dreams invented 14 years later in 532, almost certainly under pressure from Justinian to justify his uncle Justin's and his acquisition of the throne. Across the whole of Malalas' chronicle these are the only two dreams to get any significant narrative attention. But in general it is fair to say that for Malalas dreams are genuine and he has no doubts about interpretation. So they are simply related as fact without being exploited as a way of enhancing the narrative.

2 Theophanes

Malalas was a major source for my next chronicler, Theophanes, writing in the context of iconoclasm and the rise of Islam. As already mentioned, Calofonos has made a fine study of Theophanes' treatment of the thirteen dreams that he includes in his chronicle, so there is no need for me to discuss them in detail.[30] They cover divine advice whether direct from God or a saint or

27 Treadgold 2007b, 715; cf. 2007a, 114–20; 2016, 281–283.

28 Malalas, *Chron.* 14.27 (Thurn 288, ByzA 4 [14.26], 200–201). Unlikely for a variety of reasons, see Burgess 1993–94, 47–68, Scott 2010, 117–118.

29 Malalas, *Chron.* 16.20 (Thurn 334–335, ByzA 4, 229).

30 Theophanes' 13 dreams: AM 5802 (de Boor 14), Constantine's vision of Cross; AM 5816 (de Boor 23), build Constantinople; AM 5920 (de Boor 86–7), Pulcheria about St. Stephen's relics; AM 5943 (de Boor 104), Theodosios II on Marcian; AM 6008 (de Boor 162), Patriarch

other representative (e.g. Constantine's vision of True Cross; advice to build Constantinople; appointment of Marcian as Theodosius II's successor; arrival of St. Stephen's relic), explaining or warning about divine retribution for heresy and other improper acts (e.g. Antioch earthquake and Alexandrians suffering because of the Council of Chalcedon in 451) and various other topics. Instead I will look at two items that were understandably not treated by Calofonos since neither involves a genuine dream. Theophanes, a much more combative chronicler than Malalas, is much firmer on God's interference in humankind's affairs, and, as an iconodule writing under iconoclasm, on the effective power of icons.

Theophanes' most notorious account of a vision is one about which he is quite adamant that it was a sham,[31] a vision invented by Muhammad to explain away his epileptic fits to his wife and patron, Chadiga, assuring her that it was not epilepsy (which would have been evidence of insanity) but that he had been overwhelmed by visions of the archangel Gabriel. Chadiga at first sensibly rejected this and was only persuaded after a monk told her that Gabriel commonly appeared to prophets. It was Chadiga's spreading of this story that led to acceptance of Muhammad's claim to be a prophet. Here we have the huge ramification of an alleged vision that the chronicler claims was invented but which a credulous woman spread on the advice of a monk and where the chronicler's whole account of the supposed vision is given for the sole purpose of demonstrating that Islam is a sham. It is the vision story that, even though it is a fake, underpins the whole narrative of Islam, enabling Theophanes' Christian audience to understand on excellent authority that Islam was a fake religion. But the story does rely on accepting that visions could be faked and then extracting full value of the story for the narrative.[32]

The chronicler is, however, even more adamant about God organising a genuine vision, since Theophanes claims that he himself was present at its fulfillment. The iconoclast emperor Constantine V Kopronymos had in 765 thrown into the sea the precious relic of St Euphemia along with its casket.

Macedonios about Anastasios; AM 6008 (de Boor 162), Alexandrians suffering because of Chalcedon; AM 6010 (de Boor 163–4), Anastasios and Amantios [2 dreams]; AM 6021 (de Boor 177–8), Antioch earthquake as divine retribution; AM 6094 (de Boor 284–286), Maurice's choice of fate in this life or next; AM 6146 (de Boor 345–346), Thessalonica / *Thes allo nike*; AM 6194 (de Boor 372), Philippikos' eagle; AM 6218 (de Boor 406), stone thrown at Theotokos.

31 AM 6122 (de Boor 334).

32 See Neil 2013, 215–228.

Some thirty years later (twenty-two years after Constantine's death, so quite an interval of time):

> ἀλλ' ὁ θεὸς ὁ φυλάσσων τὰ ὀστᾶ τῶν εὐαρεστούντων αὐτῷ, κατὰ λόγια, ἀσινὲς τοῦτο διεφύλαξε πάλιν ἀναδείξας αὐτὸ ἐν τῇ Λήμνῳ νήσῳ.
>
> God, however, who guards the bones of those that please Him (as Scripture saith), preserved it intact and manifested it once again on the island of Lemnos,

(a sea trip of some distance, some 330 km according to Trip-Adviser, perhaps explaining why it took the relic 30 years to get there).

> διὰ γὰρ νυκτερινῆς ὁράσεως κείμενον ἀρθῆναι προσέταξε καὶ φυλάττεσθαι. ἐπὶ δὲ Κωνσταντίνου καὶ Εἰρήνης τῶν εὐσεβῶν βασιλέων, ἰνδικτιῶνι δ΄, μετὰ τῆς πρεπούσης τιμῆς ἐπανῆλθεν ἐν τῷ τεμένει αὐτῆς.... τοῦτο δὲ τὸ θαυμαστὸν καὶ ἀξιόγραφον θαῦμα μετὰ χρόνους κβ΄ τῆς τοῦ παρανόμου τελευτῆς σὺν τοῖς εὐσεβεστάτοις βασιλεῦσι καὶ Ταρασίῳ τῷ ἁγιωτάτῳ πατριάρχῃ ἡμεῖς τεθεάμεθα καὶ σὺν αὐτοῖς κατησπασάμεθα ὡς ἀνάξιοι μεγάλης ἀξιωθέντες χάριτος.
>
> By means of a nocturnal vision, God ordered it to be picked up where it lay and guarded. Under the pious Constantine [VI] and Irene, in the 4th indiction [AD 796], it returned with due honour to her church ... Twenty-two years after the criminal's death I myself saw this wonderful and memorable miracle in the company of the most pious emperors and Tarasios the most holy patriarch, and along with them I kissed it, unworthy as I was to have been granted so signal a grace.[33]

Even though Theophanes is a little short on details about the 'nocturnal vision', and even if Cyril Mango is right (as I think he is) that it was not actually Theophanes who was present but his friend the chronicler George Synkellos,[34] this is still a case of a chronicler emphasising his presence at the fulfillment of a vision—and hence that he is a committed believer in visions. So although he can point to Muhammed lying about a dream, Theophanes has no doubts about the accuracy of Christian visions and dreaming.

---

33 Theophanes, AM 6258 (de Boor 439–440).

34 Mango 1978, 9–17.

3 Skylitzes[35]

My final two chroniclers, both from the mid to late 11th century, are intriguingly linked in that Kedrenos lifted his final 500 pages almost verbatim from Skylitzes with some minimal but intriguing rewriting,[36] although the recent first critical edition sensibly omits those last 500 pages.[37] (It remains an edition of over 900 pages in two volumes.) Yet despite this link the two at first sight appear to be in marked contrast over their treatment of dreams. Dreams are rare in Skylitzes and visions only slightly less so, but Skylitzes is very much aware of the problem of interpretation for almost every vision that he includes, whereas his dreams sometimes imply little more than an abstract wish or aspiration. For instance, at the accession of Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos there is the account of Constantine Doukas' unsuccessful attempt to become emperor.

> ὁ Κωνσταντῖνος καὶ πρότερον ὀνειροπολῶν τὴν βασιλείαν καὶ διὰ παντὸς αὐτῆς ἐφιέμενος.[38]
>
> Now Constantine had already been dreaming of becoming emperor and was always aiming in that direction.[39]

Here, despite the use of ὀνειροπολῶν, this is not necessarily a reference to actual dreams rather than simply being Skylitzes' way of describing Constantine's aspirations. Likewise, we are told also of the unsuccessful attempt by Teichomeros to become the Bulgarian emperor but who lost his life in the process: "Thus he who had dreams of becoming ruler lost both the throne and his life."[40]

Here again Skylitzes is surely describing an aspiration rather than drawing attention to an actual dream, as is well brought out in each case by Wortley's translation, reinforced here by the absence of any earlier reference to any dreaming by Teichomeros. So Magdalino is perfectly justified in not including either of these examples in his catalogue of dreams in Skylitzes.[41]

---

35 Skylitzes' chronicle is arranged by reigns. It is convenient to refer to each reign as a chapter as is done for both the standard French (2004) and English (2010) translations, together with the name of the emperor as occurs in Thurn's (1973) critical edition.

36 As John Burke has pointed out to me and is discussed in Burke, Scott and Tuffin (forthcoming since February 2014).

37 Tartaglia 2016.

38 Skylitzes (Constantine VII) chapter 2 (Thurn 1973, 197.40–41).

39 Skylitzes (Constantine VII) chapter 9.2 (Wortley 2010, 191).

40 Skylitzes (Michael IV) ch. 23 (Thurn 1973, 411.35–36): καὶ ὁ μὲν ὡς ἐν ὀνείρῳ δόξας ἄρξαι σὺν τῇ ἀρχῇ καταστρέφει καὶ τὴν ζωήν; chapter 19.23 (Wortley 2010, 386).

41 Magdalino 2014, 141.

Although Skylitzes, as stated, acknowledges the problems of dream interpretation in almost every one of his few references, he never actually rejects a vision as being false. Rather he is aware of his readers' possible rejection of it and needs to meet that objection in advance as though to justify his use of the vision as genuine material for his historical narrative. We are told that the ill Patriarch Eustathios "fell asleep and saw a terrible vision (a real vision, not a dream)"[42] and later that a bishop's servant "saw in a vision (not a dream, for he was awake)"[43] swarms of locusts which then disappeared, followed by a complicated explanation, leading to this admonition:

> ταῦτα, ἔφη, ἐπῆλθε τε καὶ ἐπελεύσεται ἐφ᾽ ὑμᾶς διὰ τὴν παράβασιν τῶν τοῦ θεοῦ ἐντολῶν καὶ τὸ γενόμενον ἀνόσιον εἵς τε τὸν βασιλέα Ῥωμανὸν καὶ εἰς τὴν αὐτοῦ κοίτην.
>
> These, he said, came and will come upon you because of your transgression of God's commandments and the desecration of the emperor Romanos which has taken place and the violation of his marriage bed.[44]

Skylitzes' language in both cases here makes clear that he recognised the problem of distinguishing real visions from deceptive dreams as well as pointing to a divine warning lying behind the dream, and hence his need to emphasise to his audience that particular visions were indeed real. Likewise various portentous visions, as well as comets, presage the fall of Bardas under Michael III, which leads Skylitzes to keep his audience in suspense by noting, "Such was the dream; the narrative will show whether what was seen in the vision came to pass,"[45] as of course it later does, though also acknowledging the (remote) possibility that the visions were misleading. Elsewhere a virtuous monk has a vision about Bardas that Bardas misinterprets as favouring him, as Skylitzes points out, when what it really revealed "was the wrath of God against the Romans".[46] So here the dream's warning message is true enough but open to human misinterpretation. But Skylitzes also draws attention to the wider range

42 ἀφύπνωσε καὶ ὁρᾷ θέαμα φρικτόν, ὕπαρ, οὐκ ὄναρ: Skylitzes (Basil II and Constantine VIII bis) chapter 16.47 (Thurn 1973, 368, Wortley 2010, 348).

43 θεασαμένου … θέαμα οὐκ ὄναρ, ἀλλ᾽ ὕπαρ: Skylitzes (Michael IV) ch. 19.4 (Thurn 1973, 394–95, Wortley 2010, 372).

44 Skylitzes (Michael IV) chapter 19.4 (Thurn 1973, 395, Wortley 2010, 372).

45 καὶ ὁ μὲν ὄνειρος οὗτος, εἰ δὲ καὶ ἀπέβη τὰ θεαθέντα, δηλώσει τὰ μετὰ ταῦτα. Skylitzes, (Michael III) chapter 5.22 (Thurn 1973, 111, Wortley 2010, 112).

46 ἦν δὲ ἄρα ἡ πρὸς Ῥωμαίους ὀργὴ τοῦ θεοῦ. Skylitzes, (Basil II and Constantine VIII bis) chapter 16.2 (Thurn 1973, 317, Wortley 2010, 301).

of warning signs. In referring to earthquakes, comets and storms, Skylitzes states firmly: "In my opinion, these things presaged the forthcoming unparalleled catastrophe for the tyrants."[47] In all of this, his understanding of the phenomena of dreams and visions is so very different from that of Malalas and Theophanes.

But simply in discussing the problems of interpretation (and on occasions deliberately keeping the audience in suspense about the outcome), Skylitzes gives the visions and dreams significance in the narrative, so that they make the events associated with them stand out. As an example it is worth looking at his account of the rise of Basil I to the throne, to which Magdalino[48] and Calofonos[49] give especial attention, although they are analyzing not Skylitzes but *Theophanes Continuatus* which contains the same material but presented rather differently.

That difference in presentation is significant. Both Skylitzes and *TheophCont* tell the story of a giant eagle that shaded the baby Basil I from the sun. Basil's mother kept chasing it away by throwing stones at it, but the eagle kept returning. In Skylitzes Basil's mother eventually got the picture and so was 'finally just able to perceive the meaning of this sign from God' (μόλις ποτὲ συναίσθησιν τοῦ θείου λαμβάνει συμβόλου)[50] that Basil would become emperor. Here we have a sign from God that is not a vision (to go along with earthquakes and comets), but it is this story that then sets the tone for what follows, giving strength to the account of dreams that follows. In the very next paragraph Basil grows up, gets to Constantinople and sleeps outside a monastery whose *hegoumenos* is told in a dream to call out for Basil because he will become emperor.[51] The *hegoumenos* rejects this advice because it is just a dream; so the vision returns for a second and third time, before the *hegoumenos* finally acts, which sets up the process for Basil to become emperor, again pointing to a separation of real visions from deceptive dreams. In Skylitzes the series of rejections makes a far larger impression than if the *hegoumenos* had accepted the dream automatically, which, because of the eagle story, we as an audience know he should have done but which Skylitzes deliberately exploits to give emphasis to the story.

In *TheophCont*, the basic material is similar but the treatment is quite different, leading to Calofonos and Magdalino understandably omitting the eagle story while they concentrate exclusively on the mother's three dreams

47 ταῦτα δὲ προεμήνυον, οἶμαι, τὴν μέλλουσαν ὅσον οὐδέπω γενέσθαι καταστροφὴν τῶν τυράννων. Skylitzes, (Michael IV) chapter 19.21 (Thurn 1973, 408.62–63, Wortley 2010, 384).

48 Magdalino 2014, 127–128.

49 Calofonos 2014, 101–106.

50 Skylitzes (Basil I), chapter 6.3 (Thurn 1973, 119, Wortley 2010, 120).

51 Skylitzes (Basil I), chapter 6.4.

as the background to the *hegoumenos*' dreams. For the eagle story, although *TheophCont* tells us that "in such a way does God always, well before great events <occur>, introduce certain symbolic intimations of what is to come.... The same thing would not infrequently happen to Basil in his later childhood,"[52] there is at no stage any suggestion of his mother actually understanding what had been happening. Rather:

> ἀλλ' ἐν οὐδενὶ σχεδὸν λόγῳ τότε ταῦτα ἐτίθετο. πρὸ τοῦ γὰρ ἐμφανεῖς καταστῆναι τὰς ἐν αὐτῷ ἀρετάς, κἂν μεγάλα τὰ προφαινόμενα, ἠμελεῖτο καὶ παρελάνθανεν, οὐδενὸς δυναμένου τὸν ὄγκον τοῦ πράγματος ἐν οἰκίᾳ λιτῇ καὶ δημοτικῇ ὅπως ἔλθοι ποτὲ βαλέσθαι εἰς νοῦν.
>
> But at that time this attracted almost no attention, for before his virtues were revealed, the portents, striking as they were, went unheeded and unnoticed, since it could not have occurred to anyone that such a momentous event would ever happen in a family of simple and humble people.[53]

Furthermore, the story of Basil's journey to Constantinople and the *hegoumenos*' dream is not introduced for four lengthy paragraphs that emphasise instead a further three dreams by his mother that (somewhat elusively) foretell Basil's brilliant future, by which stage the eagle story is almost a distant memory for the reader.

In *TheophCont* it is via dreams that God reveals the future in a way that is comprehensible to human beings (in these cases, Basil's mother and the *hegoumenos*) while the eagle story (being neither a vision nor a dream but parallel rather with phenomena such as comets and earthquakes) remains beyond comprehension, certainly to a simple family in a humble rustic community, though the audience, no doubt well aware of its own contrasting urbane sophistication, will have immediately recognised (as intended) the clear evidence of Basil's future greatness.

As Magdalino puts it: "The dream narratives in the *Vita Basilii* are also there to prove the value of dreams as valid instruments of Divine Providence".[54] Madgalino then also points to a later passage in the narrative where *TheophCont* stresses this point. In the account of Basil's rise to being emperor,

---

52 *TheophCont*, Basil 1.5 (Ševčenko 2011, 23–25) οὕτω τῶν μεγάλων πραγμάτων ἀεὶ πόρρωθεν ὁ θεὸς προκαταβάλλεται τινα σύμβολα καὶ τεκμήρια τῶν εἰς ὕστερον. ... τοῦτο δὲ καὶ εἰς τὴν ἐχομένην ἡλικίαν οὐκ ὀλιγάκις γέγονεν ἐπ' αὐτῷ.

53 *TheophCont*, Basil 1.5 (Ševčenko 2011, 24–25).

54 Magdalino 2014, 128.

TheophCont can leave the eagle story as a sign that the reader is entitled to know about even though it was not understood by those who witnessed it, but it is Basil's mother's three dreams and the three dreams of the *hegoumenos* that are the clear indicators of Divine Providence to the actual participants in the history.

In Skylitzes the situation is different. There the chronicler seems conscious of the pressure on him to show his own awareness of the problems of interpreting God's signs in order to convince a perhaps doubting audience. The signs are provided by God and are therefore automatically valid, but humanity needs to be aware of the problem both of identifying which signs are genuinely from God (and so needing to distinguish between real visions and false dreams) and of properly interpreting God's genuine signs. And the chronicler needs to demonstrate to his audience that he himself is aware of these problems and so needs to provide evidence of where signs are genuine ("a real vision because he was awake"; the eagle returning three times after being shooed away). But at the same time the chronicler can exploit the eagle story in a way that allows readers to enjoy their own realisation of the *hegoumenos*' dreams being genuine and needing to be obeyed. But this in part depends on Skylitzes having demonstrated to his audience that the protective eagle and the *hegoumenos*' dreams were genuine and not illusory, something that he clearly felt was necessary when dealing with dreams and other phenomena, as shown by his care to stress this in all his examples of dreams and visions. He accepts that God does provide signs but is aware both of misinterpretation (such as Bardas' misinterpretation of the virtuous monk's vision) and of deception (such as illusory dreams).

Basil's eagle story itself is intriguing because of its own history. The eagle story had already been used quite a bit before Basil, with two separate protective-eagle stories used by Marcian in the 5th century, discussed earlier, and another by Philippikos in 702. Philippikos announced he would become emperor after dreaming that his head was shadowed by an eagle, or rather that is what we are told, first by Theophanes and then by Pseudo-Symeon, Symeon Logothete and Kedrenos,[55] for which the current emperor, Tiberios Apsimar, promptly banished him. Philippikos only became emperor a decade later which was presumably when his eagle was dreamed up. Regrettably we do not know the circumstances that required him to backdate the dream by a decade or why he had been banished by the previous emperor which would have been for something other than a not-yet-invented dream. With this history of

55 Theophanes, AM 6194 (de Boor 372); Ps-Sym. 194v.25–195r.12; Sym.Log. 116.2, (Wahlgren 2006, 174); Ked, 463.4 (Tartaglia 2016, 737).

the protective-eagle story to predict an emperor, one wonders what the reaction to Basil's re-use of it would have been among those Byzantines who knew their history, but clearly the protective eagle had a good track record for convincing Byzantines, despite the sensible Malalas' rejection of it in favour of a dream.

4 Kedrenos

Kedrenos differs from the other chroniclers notably by having included dreams and visions far more frequently than other chroniclers. Counting instances is not entirely straightforward since some return or are introduced on more than one occasion and as both dream and vision, but on my count, excluding anything that he filched from Skylitzes in his final 500 pages, there are about sixty in total (27 dreams and 34 visions but with some ambiguity about the allocation). Whatever the precise figure the total stands in marked contrast to the chronicles and histories examined by Paul Magdalino. There are also any number of other phenomena that are clearly linked to divine warnings and so have a status equivalent to visions in the narrative. Kedrenos' dreams and visions are always genuine without posing problems of interpretation, so in general he apparently felt no need to cope with Skylitzes' questioning audience. As the dreams and visions are presented clearly as divine warning signs, there simply is not room for any doubt, while the considerably larger number of dreams and visions does reveal this increasing presence of the divine in human affairs. That said, Kedrenos does also show that he was aware that interpretation could be a problem.

This is shown early in Kedrenos' Old Testament section (so near the beginning of the chronicle), when he discusses and analyses at remarkable length the problems of interpreting the prophecies that he uses to introduce his account of the patriarch Joseph's interpretation of Pharaoh's dreams. Although in that analysis he concentrates on prophecy and scarcely mentions dreams or visions themselves as being in any way problematic, he nevertheless includes dreams precisely at one point while his context of Joseph as dream interpreter certainly implies that dreams need also to be taken into account. Given the relatively large number of dreams that he includes across the rest of the chronicle, it is significant that he also draws attention to the general rarity of those sent by God, behaving as though he were more in line with Magdalino's sources.

> οὕτω μὲν τὰ ὁράματα ἀμυδρὰ τῆς ἀληθείας προτύπωσις ἦν. καὶ γὰρ καὶ τοῦτο προφητείας εἶδος, καὶ ἐν πολλοῖς ἐθεωρήθη πολλάκις ἡ δι' ὀνείρων τοῦ

> μέλλοντος προδήλωσις, ἐν οἷς διὰ κρείττονος γίνεται κατοχῆς, ὥσπερ ἐν τῷ Φαραὼ καὶ τῷ Ναβουχοδονόσορ καὶ ἄλλοις πλείστοις.
>
> In this way then the visions were a dim prefiguration of the truth—for this too is really a kind of prophecy, and the prognostication of the future through dreams has been often observed in the case of many people. In dreams the prognostication occurs through a more powerful inspiration, just as in the case of Pharaoh and Nebuchadnezzar and very many others.[56]
>
> Ἄξιον δὲ εἰδέναι τὰς διαφορὰς τῶν προφετειῶν. ἡ μὲν γάρ ἐστι πνευματικὴ καὶ ἀληθὴς πάντῃ, ὡς ἡ τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ τῶν ἁγίων, ἐν καιρῷ τῷ ἰδίῳ τὸ πέρας ἀκριβῶς τῶν προφητευομένων ἐπιφέρουσα. ἄλλη δὲ δαιμονική, ἐν τοῖς τῶν δαιμόνων θεραπευταῖς ἐνεργουμένη. πολύτροπος δὲ αὕτη.
>
> It is worthwhile knowing the differences between prophecies. For the one is spiritual and in every way truthful, like that of God and the saints, in its own time bringing about the accomplishment precisely of the things that were prophesied. The other is demonic, being brought into effect amongst those who worship demons. This one has many forms.

Kedrenos itemises at some length these forms (omitted by me), including a reference to augury:

> καὶ ὅταν δι' ἄστρων ἢ ὑδάτων ἢ ὀνείρων ματαίων, οἷοι καθ' ἑκάστον πᾶσι προσπίπτουσι. *σπάνιοι γὰρ λίαν οἱ ἄνωθεν ἥκοντες*, οὗτοι δὲ πάντες δαιμονιώδες οἱ τρόποι τῆς προφητείας καὶ στοχαστικοί, οἳ κατὰ συμβεβηκὸς ἀληθεύοντες ἔν τισιν ἐν τοῖς πλείστοις ἁμαρτάνουσιν.
>
> When it is done through stars or waters or empty dreams, the kinds of things that befall everyone every day—*for those that have come from above are exceedingly rare*. All these modes of prophecy are demonic and proceed by conjecture, and, although in some cases they prove true by accident, in most cases they miss the mark.[57]

56 Cf. Ps-Sym. 32v.38–33r.3.

57 Kedrenos, 51 (Tartaglia 2016, 126–127). My italics. For the paragraph as a whole, cf. Ps. S. 33r.3–28 almost *verbatim*.

The whole account takes up some thirty lines in Tartaglia's recent edition.[58] Admittedly the account is lifted virtually verbatim from Pseudo-Symeon, but it is nevertheless intriguing that it appears so early in his chronicle and at such length, as it is simply an introduction to a perfectly standard account of Joseph whose reliability as a dream interpreter was presumably not open to question. And although it must be doubtful whether Kedrenos' readers would have kept in mind these doubts as they slogged their way through the next 650 pages (if anyone, apart from scribes, ever did) or 1150 pages if they also read the Skylitzes section, it does at least show that Kedrenos himself was aware that there could be doubts.

At a much later stage in a somewhat different context Kedrenos also needed to point out that God has allowed various dubious characters in the past to perform wonders, occasionally for the benefit of mankind but more often to trick people or to test the strength of faith among the orthodox. He cites Anastasius of Sinai (named as the great Anastasius of Theoupolis, that is, Antioch) on the success of Apollonius of Tyana as a magician:

> Ἀπολλωνίου δὲ μέχρι νῦν ἔν τισι τόποις ἐνεργοῦσι τὰ ἀποτελέσματα ἱστάμενα, τὰ μὲ εἰς ἀποτροπὴν ζῴων τετραπόδων καὶ πετεινῶν βλάπτειν δυναμένων ἀνθρώπους,… καὶ ἄλλα εἰς ἕτερα ἐπὶ φθορᾷ καὶ βλάβῃ ἀνθρώπων ὑπάρχοντα ἀποτρόπαια ἵστανται…. οἱ δαίμονες δι' αὐτοῦ … σημεῖά τινα ἐξ ὀνόματα αὐτοῦ ἐπετέλεσαν πρὸς ἀπάτην τῶν ἐλεεινῶν ἀνθρώπων τῶν ῥᾳδίως ὑποκλεπτομένων εἰς τὰ τοιαῦτα ὑπὸ τοῦ διαβόλου.
>
> Until today in many places the talismans set up by Apollonius still work, some to ward off quadrupeds and birds capable of harming humans … and others warding off other things that destroy and harm human beings…. The demons through him … executed certain wonders in his name in order to deceive piteous people who are easily deceived in such things by the devil.[59]

And then Kedrenos continues in his own voice (though lifted verbatim from George the monk):

> ταῦτα δὲ πάντα συγχωρήσει τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ ἐνεργείᾳ δαιμόνων γίνονται πρὸς τὸ διὰ τῶν τοιούτων πραγμάτων δοκιμάζεσθαι τὴν ἡμετέραν ὀρθόδοξον πίστιν, εἰ ἑδραία ἐστὶ καὶ παγία προσμένουσα τῷ κυρίῳ καὶ μὴ ὑποσυρομένη ὑπὸ τοῦ

58 Kedrenos, 50.2–51 (Tartaglia 2016, 126–127).

59 Kedrenos, 260.15–24 (Tartaglia 2016, 438–439).

> ἐχθροῦ διὰ τῶν φαντασιωδῶν τεράτων καὶ σατανικῶν ἔργων τῶν πραττομένων ὑπὸ τῶν δούλων καὶ ὑπηρετῶν τῆς κακίας.
>
> All these things, with the permission of God and through the action of demons, are done in order that through things like this our orthodox faith is tested, [to see] if it is steadfast and firmly attached to the Lord and not seduced by the enemy through the showy wonders and satanic works performed by the slaves and servants of evil.[60]

None of this involves dreams, though one could argue that it involves visions, but again it does point to a similar situation and to the doubts against which Skylitzes found it necessary to be on guard. All this material is lifted from earlier sources, but that, for Kedrenos and other chroniclers, is evidence of its accuracy and worth, plagiarism being a virtue. And it does help reinforce his concern over the difficulty both of interpreting strange phenomena and of whether they possess divine authority or whether they can provide severe challenges to proper faith. In this his position is close to Skylitzes and so very different from Malalas.

Here it is worth noting Kedrenos' overall methodology. His chronicle at its most basic level is an attempt to combine secular history (which he largely lifts from Pseudo-Symeon, probably via the so-called *Epitome*) with ecclesiastical and theological history, for which he relies largely on George the monk. Although his discussion of the problems involved in prophecy—which also covers dreams and visions—is in the context of Joseph's dreams in the Old Testament, his source is Pseudo-Symeon. So the presence of dreams and visions should be understood in a context of secular affairs; that is, God's interference in human affairs is part of secular history, not ecclesiastical or theological history. Although that is natural and obvious enough when one bothers to think about it, it does help emphasise that in the Byzantine way of recording and remembering the past, there is always a need to keep in mind God's ever-present involvement.

5 Conclusion

It may well be wise not to try to draw general conclusions from my survey of these four chroniclers. Malalas' acceptance of dreams and visions as real is clear enough but he does not treat them as anything out of the ordinary and

60 Kedrenos, 260.29–34 (Tartaglia 2016, 439).

his noting of them is infrequent. Theophanes provides a stronger impression of divine interference in human affairs right through his chronicle than does Malalas, one of his main sources, and to do this he clearly sought out extra material. He does also show his own awareness that reports of visions could be manipulated and so he may stand mid-way between sixth-century Malalas and the eleventh-century Skylitzes and Kedrenos not only in time but also in his approach to dreams and visions. Skylitzes was considerably aware of the problem of interpretation and deception but as an historian he felt the need to emphasise that his examples are genuine. Kedrenos includes dreams and visions on a much larger scale and clearly accepts them. But he also provides the most detailed discussion of the problems of interpretation and of the oddities in his examples of God's interference in human affairs. This may suggest that, although the acceptance of dreams as messages from God remained constant, as these were exploited more in chronicle narratives, so an awareness of the problems of interpretation also grew, perhaps paralleling the growth in dream-interpretation handbooks. But at this stage this should remain merely as a suggestion as we may simply be dealing with the personal idiosyncrasies of four different writers. An examination of that is something that lies well beyond the scope of this very preliminary study.

6 Appendix: Dreams and Visions in Kedrenos

Although I have separated Kedrenos' dreams from visions in the following list, the allocation is somewhat arbitrary, though unimportant. References are all to section numbers in Tartaglia 2016, together with the page number for the precise Greek phrase that indicates a dream or vision. I have only provided enough Greek text to indicate that there is a dream or vision.

Dreams

25.1 Tartaglia 2016, 103, Inachos searching for Io (ὄναρ θεωροῦσι).

45.2 Tartaglia 2016, 122, Jacob at Baithel, εἶδε τὸ ὅραμα.

50.1 Tartaglia 2016, 125–6, Joseph's dreams as young man τῶν ἐνυπνίων ἀκούοντες.

52.1 Tartaglia 2016, 127, Joseph in prison ἀμφότεροι εἶδον ἐνύπνια.

52.2 Tartaglia 2016 128, Pharaoh's dream ἐνύπνιον εἶδε Φαραώ (plus a second time).

82 Tartaglia 2016, 178, Endymion, seeking to learn the divine name in a dream μαθεῖν … τὸ θεῖον ὄνομα ἐν ὁράματι.

83 Tartaglia 2016, 178–9, The Lord to Moses, and Aaron ἐν ὁράματι αὐτῷ γνωσθήσομαι.

85.4 Tartaglia 2016 181, Ambran to wife Iochabed about Moses κατὰ τοὺς ὕπνους πάντα … συμβησόμενα ἐκ θεοῦ.

135.1 Tartaglia 2016, 250, Argonauts' temple turned into church by Constantine after dream (Κωνσταντῖνος κατ' ὄναρ χρηματισθείς).
228.3 Tartaglia 2016, 362, God appears to Alexander the great in dream at Jerusalem ὤφθη μοι κατ' ὄναρ … ὁ θεός.
301.2 Tartaglia 2016, 481, Constantine's vision of True Cross, both daytime vision and dream (vision during night). φαίνεται οὖν αὐτῷ ἐν ἕκτῃ ὥρᾳ τῆς ἡμέρας ὁ τίμιος σταυρὸς κατεσκευασμένος, ἔχων ἐπιγραφὴν δι' ἀστέρων. <<Ἐν τούτῳ νίκα>>. ἐν ὁράματι δὲ τῆς νυκτὸς ἐφίσταται αὐτῷ ὁ κύριος λέγων …
302.1 Tartaglia 2016, 483, Constantine's dream to seek out Sylvester κατ' ὄναρ ὁρᾷ.
306.2 Tartaglia 2016, 500, Constantine's dream to build a city for the Theotokos ὑπὸ τοῦ κυρίου πρὸς αὐτὸν κατὰ τοὺς ὕπνους.
333:3 Tartaglia 2016, 545, Before his death, [Valens] saw in a dream a man saying to him: "Go quickly to the great Mimas where a dreadful fate will snatch your wretched self." ἐθεάσατο κατ' ὄναρ.
374:1 Tartaglia 2016, 602, St John to Theodosius II that Marcian would succeed him Ἰωάννης ὁ θεολόγος ἀπεκάλυψεν.
396:1 Tartaglia 2016, 615, The deceased patriarch Makedonios to someone called Theodore in a dream εἶπεν ἐν ὁράματι.
396:2 Tartaglia 2016, 615, An Alexandrian saw a terrible spectre in his dreams. καθ' ὕπνους δέ τις εἶδέ τινα φοβερὸν λέγοντα.
396:5 Tartaglia 2016, 616–617, A terrifying figure appeared to Anastasios in a dream saying: "Do not harm Justin and Justinian in any way." παρέστη αὐτῷ τις κατ' ὄναρ φοβερὸς λέγων.
396:6 Tartaglia 2016, 617, Anastasios saw in a vision a terrifying man holding a book. He told Amantios the *praepositus* about the dream who said: "I too saw that", Ἀναστάσιος εἶδεν ἐν ὁράματι ἄνδρα φοβερόν … εἶπεν αὐτῷ τὸ ὅραμα. ὁ δὲ εἶπεν ὅτι Κἀγὼ ἐθεασάμην … After Proklos the interpreter of dreams, had come ἐλθόντος δὲ τοῦ ὀνειροκρίτου Πρόκλου.
414 Tartaglia 2016, 649, The (deceased) philosopher appeared to the bishop in a dream saying, ἐπιφαίνεται κατ' ὄναρ ὁ φιλόσοφος τῷ ἐπισκόπῳ.
424:1 Tartaglia 2016, 663, A divine utterance was given to this emperor through an angel in a dream τούτῳ τῷ βασιλεῖ γέγονε θεία ὀμφή, ἀγγέλου κατ' ὄναρ εἰπόντος.
426:2 Tartaglia 2016, 666, The master of the house saw the Theotokos in a dream standing. ὁ δεσπότης δὲ τῆς οἰκίας εἶδε κατ' ὄναρ ἐπιστᾶσαν αὐτῷ τὴν θεοτόκον.
433:1 Tartaglia 2016, 676.13–14, Maurice's vision about death. εἶδεν ὁ Μαυρίκιος ἐν μιᾷ νυκτί.
451 Tartaglia 2016, 718, Thessaloniki / Give victory to another. θεωρεῖ κατ' ὄναρ ὁ βασιλεύς.
453:3 Tartaglia 2016, 724.19, But not even while he was in Sicily did the dream fly away from him. ἀλλ οὐδ' ἐν Σικελίᾳ διατρίβοντι ἀπέπτη ὁ ὄνειρος ἀπ' αὐτοῦ.
453:3 Tartaglia 2016, 724.14, Losing heart at keeping on seeing this dream the spiritless fellow decided to depart for Sicily. καθ' ὕπνους συχνῶς ἐφαίνετο αὐτῷ.

463:4 Tartaglia 2016, 737, Apsimaros exiled the patrician Philippikos, the son of Nikephoros, because he was dreaming of becoming emperor. For he claimed to have seen in a dream that his head was shadowed by an eagle ἔφασκε γὰρ ἑωρακέναι κατ' ὄναρ ὅτι ἡ κεφαλὴ αὐτοῦ ἐσκιάζετο ὑπὸ ἀετοῦ.

Visions and divine voices

39:1 Tartaglia 2016, 117, The Word of God to Abraham τῷ Ἀβραὰμ ὁ τοῦ θεοῦ φανείς.

50:2 Tartaglia 2016, 126, visions were a dim profiguration of the truth τὰ ὁράματα ἀμυδρὰ τῆς ἀληθείας προτύπωσις ἦν

[57:3 Tartaglia 2016, 135, God talking to Moses].

63:4 Tartaglia 2016, 146, Moses was again ordered by God to go up on the mountain and take the inscribed tablets that God had set down as law.

68:6 Tartaglia 2016, 156, Angel of Lord to Gedeon ὤφθη ἄγγελος κυρίου τῷ Γεδεών.

79 Tartaglia 2016, 173, Daniel and prophecy of Antichrist ἐν τῇ ὀπτασίᾳ ἑωρακέναι

134:2 Tartaglia 2016, 248, Gabriel to Daniel of Christ τῷ Δανιὴλ ὡράθησαν … αἱ ὀπτασίαι cf. 154 Tartaglia 2016, 283–284, Δανιὴλ τὰς διὰ τῆς τοῦ Γαβριὴλ ὀπτασίας εἶδε.

209:1 Tartaglia 2016, 342, Daniel in the vision of the four beasts ὁ Δανιὴλ ἐν τῇ τῶν τεσσάρων θηρίων ὀπτασίᾳ cf. 211.1 (same Greek).

216 Tartaglia 2016, 348, Zachary saw the archangel Gabriel announcing to him the conception of John the Baptist. Εἶδε τὸν ἀρχάγγελον Γαβριήλ.

217 Tartaglia 2016, 349, Theotokos heard a voice saying to her from God, 'You will bear my son'. ἤκουσε φωνῆς λεγούσης αὐτῇ θεόθεν. [Not vision or dream but equivalent].

217 Tartaglia 2016, 349, And after six months the archangel Gabriel appeared to her, announcing the salvation of the world. But she told no one of this until after she gave birth. ὤφθη αὐτῇ ὁ ἀρχάγγελος Γαβριήλ.

220:3 Tartaglia 2016, 352, Virgin's death [the archangel appeared to her, bearing the prize. She surrendered her holy soul to God her Lord and son aged 72].

256:3 Tartaglia 2016, 414, I had a vision, and behold a ram standing. εἶδον ἐν ὁράματι, καὶ ἰδοὺ κριὸς ἑστηκώς.

256.3 Tartaglia 2016, 414, You will see more clearly, when you have heard this vision, what the prophet announced to you in parables. εἴσεσθε σαφέστερον ἀκούσαντες αὐτῆς τῆς ὁράσεως.

308:1 Tartaglia 2016, 502, Helen, advised by a vision, departed to Jerusalem … finding the honoured cross Ἑλένη ἡ μήτηρ τοῦ βασιλέως στεφθεῖσα δι' ὀπτασίας εἰς τὰ Ἱεροσόλυμα ἀπέρχεται … τὸν τίμιον σταυρὸν εὑροῦσα.

311:1 Tartaglia 2016, 511, Philo furthermore said [this] regarding the vision of God which Moses saw in the bush: Φίλων περὶ τοῦ θεάματος, οὗ εἶδε Μωυσῆς ἐν τῇ βάτῳ

346:1 Tartaglia 2016, 559, Theodosios the Great, while at war with the usurper Eugenios, after coming across a prayer-house on a mountain, fell on the ground weeping and beseeching God to help him. A little later awakening from sleep in despair he saw two

[figures] seated on white horses telling him to be of good heart and to arouse the army for battle. Of the figures one said that he was John himself and the other was Philip, both being apostles. One of the soldiers [also] saw this vision and reported it to the emperor. ταύτην δὲ τὴν ὅρασιν καὶ εἷς τῶν στρατιωτῶν ἰδὼν ἀπήγγειλε τῷ βασιλεῖ.

352 Tartaglia 2016, 564, Arsenios while praying to God at night heard a voice saying. οὗτος ἐν νυκτὶ δεόμενος τοῦ θεοῦ ἤκουσε φωνῆς λεγούσης

356 Tartaglia 2016, 566, Cyril of Alexandria was judged worthy of being put right by a mystic revelation, in which he seemed to be in some frightening and very beautiful place, in which crowds of holy angels stood around the mother of God. ἀποκαλύψει τινὶ μυστικῇ, ἐν ᾗ ἐδόκει ἔν τινι καὶ περικαλλεῖ καὶ φοβερῷ πάνυ τόπῳ εὑρεθῆναι.

359 Tartaglia 2016, 573–574, When after praying for this for a long time I got into a [state of] ecstasy I saw a very beautiful man who grabbed me by the right hand. ἐπὶ πολύν οὖν χρόνον τοῦτο εὐχόμενος ἐν μιᾷ γίνομαι ἐν ἐκστάσει, καὶ θεωρῶ ἄνδρα τινὰ πάνυ εὐειδῆ κρατήσαντά με τῆς δεξιᾶς χειρός.

366:2 Tartaglia 2016, 580, On this very night the blessed Pulcheria saw St Stephen saying, 'Behold your prayer has been heard.' θεωρεῖ ἡ μακαρία Πουλχερία τῇ αὐτῇ νυκτὶ τὸν ἅγιον Στέφανον λέγοντα αὐτῇ. «Ἰδοῦ ἡ προσευχή σου εἰσηκούσθη».

371:1 Tartaglia 2016, 587, A young man was lifted into the air and heard a divine voice ordering him to tell the bishop ἡρπάγη νεανίας εἰς τὸν ἀέρα καὶ ἤκουσε θείας φωνῆς.

393:6 Tartaglia 2016, 611, When an earthquake was about to occur, a journeying soldier saw two soldiers coming towards him and one of them shouted back, 'Take care of the house where Gregory's tomb is'. [Context rather than vocabulary shows this is a vision].

396:5 Tartaglia 2016, 616, Everything turned out exactly as the vision had proclaimed. παρέστη αὐτῷ τις κατ᾽ ὄναρ φοβερὸς λέγων.

402:2 Tartaglia 2016, 626, There appeared to one god-fearing man in a vision to tell everyone where they should inscribe above their door lintels, 'Christ is with us, stay'. And when this was done the anger of God stayed. ἐφάνη δέ τινι θεοσοβεῖ ἀνθρώπῳ ἐν ὁράματι εἰπεῖν πᾶσιν.

423 Tartaglia 2016, 660, She found the boy sitting in the furnace quite unburnt. After taking him out she asked him how it was that he stayed unburnt and he replied: "A lady wearing purple came and put out the flame and told me, 'Don't be afraid, boy'." [Context rather than vocabulary shows this is a vision].

431 Tartaglia 2016, 672–673, (?) The prefect entreated him by oaths not to dispel the vision before everybody had had their fill of this incredible sight. ὁ ὕπαρχος ὅρκοις ἔβαλε μὴ καταλῦσαι τὴν θεωρίαν, πρὶν ἅπαντες ἐμφορηθῶσι τῆς παραδόξου ταύτης ὁράσεως.

433:1 Tartaglia 2016, 676, So with everyone praying for him, Maurice one night had a vision that he was standing at the Bronze Gate of the palace by the image of the Saviour and beside him was a great crowd of prisoners [of war], shouting and accusing him. And a voice came from the holy portrait saying, "Bring forward Maurice." εἶδεν ὁ Μαυρίκιος ἐν μιᾷ νυκτί … καὶ φωνὴ γέγονεν ἐκ τοῦ ἁγίου χαρακτῆρος λέγουσα.

434:3 Tartaglia 2016, 680, In Alexandria a calligrapher who was pious, when he was returning home late at night from the night service, heard some statues on the altars saying that Maurice and his children had been killed and [reporting] all the calamities that had taken place in Byzantium. [Context rather than vocabulary].
434:11 Tartaglia 2016, 683, A holy monk from the days of Phokas in reflecting on God's judgement said, 'Lord, why did you give the Christians such a lawless emperor?' And a voice came to him unseen [saying] that, 'I could not find anyone worse than him [better suited] to the evil of those now inhabiting the city.' [Context rather than vocabulary].
440:1 Tartaglia 2016, 752–753, The barbarians saw early in the morning as the sun was rising a distinguished woman coming out of the gate at Blachernai with some eunuchs. Believing her to be the empress, the wife of Heraclius, and that she was coming out to their leader for the sake of peace since the emperor was not in the City, they made a passage for her, so that any other people coming out would be subject to them. Then when they saw that she had gone out beyond the extent of the ditch and was not going off to their leader, they followed behind her. As they got close to her at the place known as the old rock, both she and those with her became invisible, and they themselves became entangled with one another and made their crowd full of confusion and they set about slaughtering one another until evening. [Context rather than vocabulary].
476:4 Tartaglia 2016, 752–753, A certain Constantine … on seeing an image icon of the Theotokos that had been set up, picked up a stone and threw it at her. He broke the image and trampled on it after it had fallen down. He then saw in a vision the Lady standing beside him and saying to him: 'See what a brave thing you have done to me! Verily upon your head you have done it,' θεωρεῖ οὖν ἐν ὁράματι παρεστῶσαν αὐτῷ τὴν δέσποιναν καὶ λέγουσαν αὐτῷ.
484:1 Tartaglia 2016, 762, In the 15th [indiction] all of a sudden without visible cause a great many oily crosslets began to appear in the imperial city upon men's garments and on the furniture of the churches. The mysteriousness of this presage inspired great sorrow and despondency among the people. Then God's wrath occurred [in the form of] various sufferings, destroying unsparingly not only the inhabitants of the city but also those of all its outskirts. Many men had hallucinations and, being in ecstasy, imagined that they were in the company of certain strangers of terrible aspect who, as it were, addressed in friendly fashion those they met and conversed with them. [Context rather than vocabulary].
[Pretend/sham vision] 444:1 Tartaglia 2016, 705, Being destitute Moamed entered [the service of] some rich woman who was a relative of his, called Chadiga…. Since he was demonic, and he also suffered from epilepsy, he placated his wife, who was extremely upset that she, who was a noblewoman, had married a man such as he who was not only poor but was also demonic, by saying "I see a vision of an angel called Gabriel and I fall down." With her was a monk who had been exiled there for his erroneous beliefs, a friend of hers, and she related everything to him including the name of the angel.

Wanting to satisfy her he told her that [the man] had spoken the truth; for this is the angel who is sent to every prophet. And she, believing the word of this false prophet, proclaimed him to the other women of her tribe. Ἀγγέλου ὀπτασίαν λεγονένου Γαβριὴλ θεωρῶ καὶ πίπτω.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

Evagrius Scholasticus (1898) *Ecclesiastical History*. Eds J. Bidez and L. Parmentier (London). Trans. M. Whitby (2000) *The Ecclesiastical History of Evagrius Scholasticus*, TTH 33 (Liverpool).

Kedrenos, George (2016) *Synopsis Historion*. Ed. L. Tartaglia, *Georgii Cedreni Historiarum Compendium* (Rome).

Malalas, John (2000) *Chronographia*. Ed. I. Thurn, CFHB 35 (Berlin). Trans. E. Jeffreys, M. Jeffreys, R. Scott et al. (1986) *The Chronicle of John Malalas, A Translation*, Byzantina Australiensia 4 (Melbourne) = ByzA 4.

Procopius (1962) *De Bello Vandalico*. Ed. J. Haury, revised G. Wirth, in *Procopius, Opera*, vol. 1 (Leipzig).

Pseudo-Symeon, *Chronographia* in MS Paris Bibliothèque nationale gr. 1712.

Skylitzes, John (1973). Ed. I Thurn, *Synopsis Historiarum*, CFHB 5 (Berlin). Trans. J. Wortley (2010) *John Skylitzes: A Synopsis of Byzantine History 811–1057* (Cambridge). Trans. B. Flusin, notes J.-C. Cheynet (2004) *Jean Skylitzès: Empereurs de Constantinople*, Réalités byzantines 8 (Paris).

Symeon Logothete (2006) Ed. S. Wahlgren, *Chronicon*, CFHB 44, vol. 1 (Berlin).

Theophanes (1883) Ed. C. de Boor, *Chronographia Theophanis*, vol. 1 (Leipzig). Trans. C. Mango and R. Scott with G. Greatrex (1997) *The Chronicle of Theophanes the Confessor. Byzantine and Near Eastern History, AD 284–813* (Oxford).

Theophanes Continuatus (2011) Ed. and trans. I. Ševčenko, *Chronographiae quae Theophanis continuati nomine fertur liber quo vita Basilii imperatoris amplectitur*, CFHB 42 (Berlin).

Secondary Sources

Angelidi, C. and Calofonos, G. T. (eds) (2014) *Dreaming in Byzantium and Beyond* (Farnham and Burlington, VT).

Burgess, R. W. (1993–94) 'The Accession of Marcian in the light of Chalcedonian apologetic and Monophysite polemic', *BZ* 86–7, 47–68.

Burke, J., Scott, R. and Tuffin, P. (forthcoming) 'Originality via plagiarism in the Byzantine Chronicle of Kedrenos', in R. Tocci (ed.) *The Brill Companion to Byzantine Chronicles* (Leiden).

Calofonos, G. T. (2010) 'Dream Narratives in Historical Writing: Making Sense of History in Theophanes' *Chronographia*', in Macrides 2010, 133–144.

Calofonos, G. T. (2014) 'Dream Narratives in the Continuation of Theophanes', in Angelidi and Calofonos 2014, 95–123.

Efthymiadis, S. (2015) Review of Angelidi and Calofonos 2014 in *Bryn Mawr Classical Review* 2015.04.58.

Jeffreys, E. (2016) 'The Manuscript Transmission of Malalas' Chronicle Reconsidered', in M. Meier, C. Radtki and F. Schulz (eds) *Die Weltchronik des Johannes Malalas: Autor—Werk—Überlieferung*, Malalas Studien 1 (Stuttgart), 139–151.

Macrides, R. (ed.) (2010) *History as Literature in Byzantium* (Birmingham).

Magdalino, P. (2014) 'The Historiography of Dreaming in Medieval Byzantium', in Angelidi and Calofonos 2014, 125–144.

Mango, C. (1978) 'Who wrote the Chronicle of Theophanes?', *Zbornik Radova Vizantološkog instituta* 18, 9–17.

Neil, B. (2013) 'The Earliest Greek Understandings of Islam: John of Damascus and Theophanes the Confessor', in W. Mayer and B. Neil (eds) *Religious Conflict from Early Christianity to the Rise of Islam*, Arbeiten zur Kirchengeschichte 121 (Berlin), 215–228.

Scott, R. (2010) 'From Propaganda to History to Literature: The Byzantine Stories of Theodosius' Apple and Marcian's Eagles', in Macrides 2010, 115–131.

Scott, R. (2012) *Byzantine Chronicles and the Sixth Century* (Farnham).

Treadgold, W. (2007a) *The Early Byzantine Historians* (Basingstoke).

Treadgold, W. (2007b) 'The Byzantine World Histories of John Malalas and Eustathius of Epiphania', *The International History Review* 29/4, 709–745.

Treadgold, W. (2016) 'The Unwritten Rules for Writing Byzantine History', in S. Marjanović-Dušanić (ed.) *Proceedings of the 23rd International Congress of Byzantine Studies, Belgrade 22–27 August 2016, Plenary Papers* (Belgrade), 277–292.

CHAPTER 10

Dream Portents in Early Byzantine and Early Islamic Chronicles

Bronwen Neil

The recent study of early Byzantine dream manuals has opened a window onto the concerns of ordinary people,[1] whether Christian or Muslim, as well as providing a theoretical framework for their interpretation. The tenth-century Arab Christian dreambook known as the *Oneirocriticon of Achmet* is evidence for the common roots of Byzantine Christian and Islamic dream interpretation in this literary genre.[2] Other evidence of cultural cross-over is revealed in early Islamic and Byzantine dream narrative accounts in hagiography and chronicles. However, these genres reflect less the concerns of ordinary people and more the concerns of emperors, soldiers and saints. Even a cursory comparison of the two traditions suggests that early Islamic dream-narrators used dreams in ways similar to their Byzantine (and Jewish) contemporaries,[3] and that their dream accounts served similar literary functions. This apparently arcane aspect of Greek and Arabic literature is worthy of study because it is a living tradition in many modern societies that descend from the Byzantine and Islamic traditions.[4]

Previous studies of Byzantine chronographic literature on dreams have focused on the period from the 11th century onward.[5] I am interested here to see whether there are similarities between Byzantine and Islamic literature on dreams from earlier chronographic literature of the 7th to 10th centuries.

1 As noted by MacAlister 1992, 140, of the *Oneirocriticon* of Artemidorus, a second-century Greek dream-interpreter from Asia minor. For a translation of six Byzantine *oneirocritica* see Oberhelman 2008 and his discussion of the genre in Oberhelman 2014. Many thanks to Aydogan Kars and an anonymous reviewer for their suggestions and comments.

2 Oberhelman 1991; Mavroudi 2002.

3 As Bulkeley 2008, 194, and Green 2003 have observed.

4 As argued by Angelidi and Calofonos 2014; Edgar 2011; Felek and Knysh 2012; Kinberg 2012; Oberhelman 2013; Neil 2016.

5 E.g. Magdalino 2014 studies sources ca. 1000–1360; Calofonos starts with the compilation of tenth-century historical works known as *The Continuation of Theophanes*, which cover the 9th and 10th centuries, from Leo V the Armenian to 961, during the rule of Romanos II Porphyrogenitus (959–963) (Calofonos 2014). See especially the helpful tabulation of Theophanes Continuatus' references to visions in Calofonos 2014, 122–123.

© KONINKLIJKE BRILL NV, LEIDEN, 2018 | DOI:10.1163/9789004375710_012

Other fields of study which produced literature, such as theology, law, mysticism and politics, could also be compared. Chronicles have been chosen because they lend themselves to comparison across the two monotheistic religions of Islam and Christianity. Both traditions used chronography to illustrate the common idea of God's providential hand operating throughout human history, from the first man Adam to the current day. Hadiths are also briefly analysed here, as they preserve the Prophet's sayings and the early Islamic traditions that were incorporated into histories such as the *Tariq* of Al-Tabarī, which spans from before the creation of Adam to Al-Tabarī's own lifetime (224–310 AH; 839–923 CE).[6]

I focus here on the 7th to 10th centuries because this foundation period for Islam shows the closest interaction between the Islamic tradition and its Byzantine models. When we talk about dreams in Arabic literature, Ibn Sīrīn immediately comes to mind. Ibn Sīrīn (653/654–728 CE), a philosopher and prolific author from the earliest period of Islam, is generally thought to be the author of *The Interpretation of Dreams*, a tenth-century dreambook attributed to him. No genuine written works by Ibn Sīrīn survive, and his oral dream lore is known only from mentions of it in later literature.[7] These fall outside the generic limits of this study, as do the Byzantine dream key manuals (*oneirocritica*) that they resemble.

Historical dreams are of course literary creations, usually related third-hand by a chronicler with his own agenda.[8] Calofonos notes that they are useful building blocks for making a larger narrative move along and for illustrating larger themes in the narrative, such as the moral decline of the empire and punishment of heterodoxy in Theophanes Confessor (d. 818).[9] Narrated dreams can be used in chronicles and hagiography, as in other literary genres, to "shape and reshape culture".[10] They enable a distancing of authority for both the dreamer and the narrator. If God sends a dream, the dreamer is not responsible for its content, even if it is critical of the regime or other religious leaders. The narrator is also exonerated. As early as the 6th century, Byzantine subversives and commentators realised that dreams were very useful tools for

6 Radtke and O'Kane 1996, 38–97. AH indicates the dating according to the Islamic lunar calendar, starting from Muhammad's *hijra* (the migration from Mecca to Medina) in 622. From here on, I give dates according to the Common Era.

7 Lamoreaux 2002, 19–20.

8 See Calofonos 2014, 96–97, and Mavroudi 2014 on the limitations of dream accounts in Byzantine historical sources.

9 Calofonos 2010, 135.

10 Marlow 2008b, 9–11.

establishing alternative religious authority or exercising criticism of the current or past regime (*Kaiserkritik*).[11]

The parallels within the Byzantine texts adduced here will become obvious. Unlike our post-Freudian understanding of dreams as reflections of individual psychic processes of the unconscious, dreams had both individual and social significance in the Byzantine tradition, and also in the Islamic tradition up to the current day. Just like the ancient letter, dreams given to individuals were often shared for the spiritual benefit of the whole community. Immense semiotic power was thus attributed to a medium that was able to be misrepresented and manipulated at will. This has always been the problem with dreams and is probably the main reason why they are discounted in post-Enlightenment societies. That is to say, if Freud had not existed, it would have been necessary to invent him, as psychoanalyst Nina Coltart put it.[12]

1 Types of Dream in Byzantine Sources

In her 1996 study of ninth-century Byzantine hagiography, Margaret Kenny identified six types of dream:[13] 1. Personal-mnemic, which concern everyday matters in the dreamer's life; 2. Medical-somatic, which includes those episodes related to the workings of the body; 3. Prophetic, which present aspects of future events; 4. Archetypal-spiritual, in which the dreamer explores existential questions, and which results in some transformation of behaviour; 5. Nightmares, with upsetting or frightening images; 6. Lucid dreams, in which the dreamer is aware of experiencing a dream and then consciously alters the course of events in the dream. Let us consider which of these types are applicable to the study of Byzantine and Islamic chronicles.

Type 1, personal-mnemic dreams, which pertain to everyday matters in the dreamer's life, were not considered worthy of discussion in chronicles or hagiography, nor were medical-somatic dreams (type 2), and so have been excluded from this study. Type 3, prophetic or mantic dreams, are at first glance most like those with which we are concerned here. However, our prophetic dreams pertain not only to the future but also to the present; they are divine messages rather than insights into the future. Any dream in which a prophet appears

11 Strickler (2018) looks at the sixth-century precursors to seventh-century Byzantine apocalyptic, which featured frequent *vaticinia ex eventu* and *Kaiserkritik*, in Chapter 2. See further Strickler's chapter in this volume.

12 Coltart 1991, 154.

13 Kenny 1996, online.

may be considered prophetic (Calofonos would call these "oracular", and they include appearances of angels and saints who deliver messages which may have personal or wider significance).[14] I avoid the term 'oracular' as it stems from a pre-Christian tradition that is not comparable with the Christian tradition of God-sent dreams, in that oracles had to be requested from the gods, their messages were usually ambiguous, and the delivery of an oracle required no virtue or action on the part of the seeker. Critiques of those who talk about the unseen (*ghayb*), or the soothsayers, appear immediately with the Qur'an and early hadith, as did criticism of divination in early Christian and Byzantine sources.[15] To cite a hadith of the prophet Muhammed, "The believer's dream is [only] one forty-sixth part of prophecy",[16] where prophecy is meant as "knowledge of the future". The fourth type seems to be more applicable than Type 3 to prophetic dreams in the Islamic context.

Kenny's Type 4, archetypal-spiritual dreams, in which the dreamer explores existential questions, and which may transform the dreamer's waking behaviour, is perhaps Kenny's most problematic category, as it covers all the dreams that are included in chronicles. Any of these dream types, if negative, could also be classed as nightmares, Kenny's fifth type. Lucid dreams (type 6) are mentioned in Islamic dream narratives as well as Byzantine, as are types 3, 4 and 5. While Kenny does not mention them in her ninth-century sources, dreams inspired by the Devil or demons *are* a feature of Byzantine hagiography, and later of Islamic hagiography. Bettina Krönung finds instances of demonic ecstasy in various *Lives* written in our period of interest (the 7th to 10th centuries): those of Symeon Stylite the Younger, Martha, John the Almsgiver, Porphyry of Gaza, Daniel the Stylite and Theodore of Sykeon.[17] However, in historiographical texts of this period there are no dreams of demonic origin, and thus no deception in dreams.[18] Only the dreams which proved "true" were considered worthy of relating.

In preference to Kenny's taxonomy, I have adopted Louise Marlow's identification of the disparate functions of literary dreams, which include: "moral

14 Calofonos 2014, 102–103 and n. 35 on the pagan tradition of oracular dreams, of which prophetic dreams were a subset.

15 Neil (forthcoming) discusses the early Christian condemnation of divination; see also Neil 2016, 54–57; on the relaxation of Byzantine legal proscriptions of the practice by Leo VI (886–912), see Mavroudi 2002, 61–62 and n. 36; Neil 2016, 58.

16 *Saḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*; this hadith appears in al-Bukhārī, *Saḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Book 9 ch. 104, at icias.com/textarchive/bukhari/104.htm (accessed 9.02.17). It also appeared in the book of Hadiths by Abu Muslim.

17 Krönung 2014, 52.

18 Calofonos 2014, 98.

edification, providing support for a specific doctrinal or legal point of view, affirmation of a dynasty's claims to political legitimacy, the establishment of an individual's credentials in a given situation or arena, predicting, cautioning against or foreshadowing future events, addressing a disputed or even unmentionable topic, social or political commentary, or satire."[19] We will see below how dreams are shaped also by genre, whether hagiography or chronography, and how constant these functions are across early Byzantine and Islamic sources. Let us start with dreams in Islamic and Byzantine hagiography, then proceed to their functions in early Byzantine and Islamic chronicles.

2 Islamic Dream Narratives in Hagiography

Islamic hagiographic dream tales, such as those related in the *Life of the Friends of God* by the Sufi Alī-Hakīm al-Tirmidhī (d. 892 CE), were similar to the Byzantine in that they departed from the Aristotelian tradition, which denied that the medium of dreams could reveal the divine or the future. Inheritors of the Platonic tradition, on the other hand, were far more open to the possibility of prophetic or mantic dreams. The use of dreams to predict one's spiritual future was an innovation of Christianity (based on the New Testament story of *Dives* in Luke 16:19–31), with its concern for the afterlife, and proved even more popular in the medieval West than in the Greek East. It was also taken up in early Islam, where dreams were used to endorse Islamic scriptures and sayings of its founder, Muhammad.

In Islamic dream narratives, as in Greek historiographic literature, dreams were treated as divine (or demonic) revelations. In Arabic the noun for dream interpretation (*ta'bīr*) is related to the verb meaning "to draw moral lessons from mundane events" or "to contemplate" (*i'tibār*).[20] Knowledge of scripture and virtuous living were essential for successful dream interpretation. In relation to the patriarch Joseph, known to us from Genesis, the seventh-century hadith-narrator Ibn Abbas (d. 687–688) is quoted by the later Persian Sufi Haravi or Mollā Meskīn (fl. 15th c.) as saying that dream interpretation is the most complex of sciences because "the [dream] interpreter must master several other branches of knowledge", including arithmetic, times, natures, wisdom, words, and the divine book and hadith (sayings). This knowledge started, according to Meskīn, with Muhammad: "This knowledge became revealed to

19 Marlow 2008b, 11.
20 Mahallati 2008, 158.

his [the Prophet's] time, and his companions also received it as a blessing for their status".[21]

Although the early *Lives* of Muhammad affirm that the Prophet received his revelations from the angel Gabriel in two visions, the original Qur'anic account of these (53:1–18) is somewhat vague.[22] The appearance of the angel Gabriel to Muhammad was in line with earlier Jewish and Christian traditions. It is verified by a hadith in the collection of al-Bukhārī (d. 870 CE), in which Muhammad's youngest wife Ā'isha relates how the angel Gabriel first appeared to Muhammad in a dream and commanded him to read words of revelation, even though the Prophet protested that he could not read.[23]

2.1 *Abū Ja'far al-Qāyinī*

Dreams could also be used to authenticate hadiths, as in the dream narrative of Abū Ja'far al-Qāyinī, a tenth-century specialist in hadith from near Nishapur. He reported a dream he had on 27 October 996, in which he conversed with the Prophet.[24] It is conjectured that Al-Qāyinī had Sufi affiliations since he enquired particularly of the Prophet about the orthodoxy of Sufism. Sufis upheld the belief that spiritual authority could be revealed in dreams, and that devotion to the prophets was as important as studying hadith. This is also very evident in the writings of the Persian Sufi al-Tirmidhī.[25] The Sufi mystical tradition, which began in the 9th century, introduced the element of divine love to Sufi asceticism, a piety movement which sprang up in protest against the worldliness of the Umayyad Caliphate (661–749).

First, al-Qāyinī described a vision of an interaction with the Prophet while he was a child, in which Muhammad lifted him up above the heads of the adults surrounding him, thus establishing his spiritual credentials.[26] Then he asked Muhammad about the truth of his reported statement that "[W]hoever has seen me in a dream (*ru'ya*) has seen me in a waking state, for Satan does not imitate me."[27] The Prophet answered that it was true. Al-Qāyinī pressed

21 Meskīn 1985, 123–124, in Mahallati 2008, 163.

22 Peters 2003, 54, 62–63.

23 The hadith goes like this: "Ā'isha said: The commencement of the Divine Inspiration to Allah's Apostle was in the form of good righteous [true] dreams in his sleep. He never had a dream but that it came true like bright daylight." *Saḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Book 9, ch. 87, hadith 111, cited from icias.com/textarchive/bukhari/087.htm (accessed 9.02.17). The Arabic text is edited by Shākir 1958.

24 Lamoreaux 2008. A translation of this brief text is found at Lamoreaux 2008, 87–96.

25 Radtke and O'Kane 1996.

26 Al-Qayini, V.1 (trans. Lamoreaux 2008, 90).

27 Al-Qayini, VI.2 (trans. Lamoreaux 2008, 90–91). This hadith appears in al-Bukhārī, *Saḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Book 9 ch. 104, at icias.com/textarchive/bukhari/104.htm (accessed 9.02.17).

him, asking if this appearance in dreams was the real form of the Messenger or a likeness of the form that was buried in Medina? He replied that it was a likeness of the form. Then Al-Qāyinī pressed him further: "Is it the same spirit in the form as in the likeness of the form?" Again, the Prophet replied in the affirmative. This discussion of the spirit that imbues the image perceived by the dreamer reveals that the image of the Prophet in a dream makes it a true dream.

Later in al-Qāyinī's lucid dream (that is, a dream in which the dreamer knew that he was dreaming), he asks the Prophet if Sufism is acceptable, outlining three contentious teachings of the sect: they forbid disputational theology, obstinacy in religion, and discussion of the rival chains of command (*fitna*) of the Companions,[28] through Muhammad's nephew Ali or his young wife Ā'isha. The Prophet answers that it is acceptable as are all the other sects of Islam. What matters most is the unity of believers and their tolerance of each other.

Al-Qāyinī's vision paved the way for other appearances by imams (spiritual leaders) in dreams. Visions of the Prophet and other spiritual leaders frequently occurred at the tomb of the prophet in Medina and those of his immediate followers. For example, some three centuries after the death of 'Ali ibn Abi Talib (Muhammad's cousin and the first imam, according to the Shi'a, or the fourth caliph, according to the Sunni) in 661 CE, the tenth-century Abbasid poet Khalid Sindawi reported appearances of the Prophet to visitors at 'Ali ibn Abi Talib's tomb in Najaf (Iraq). Shi'ite writers promoted this tomb as a pilgrimage site, modelling its virtues on the Sunni shrines at Mecca and Medina. For the Shi'a, 'Ali ibn Abi Talib's tomb is still the third holiest place of worship and the destination of many pilgrims each year, a testimony to the power that visions still hold in Islamic cultures. Even today, if the Prophet or one of the Imams appears in a dream to a Shi'ite Muslim, his sayings are treated as true hadiths "which no devout Muslim could possibly doubt".[29] The Sunni are rather more reserved about visions of the Prophet in dreams.[30]

3 Byzantine Hagiographic Dreams

We find an interesting parallel here with the church-supported process of incubation (pagan and then Byzantine Christian) at shrines like that of Saints

28 Al-Qayini, XV.1–2 (trans. Lamoreaux 2008, 95 and n. 77).

29 Katz 2012, 185.

30 See the online forum *Islamic Lifestyle and Social Issues* (2017); Abuo-Almajd (2013), the transcription of an interview with Iain Edgar about the status of Prophet Muhammad's appearances in dreams, and the findings of Kinberg 2012.

Cyrus and John at Menouthis in Egypt. Many appearances of the saints at Menouthis required the incubants to cleanse themselves first of the heresy of monothelitism before they could be healed of their physical diseases.[31]

Likewise, in the *Spiritual Meadow* of John Moschus, Sophronius' disciple, appearances of the saints, especially the apostle Peter and later bishops of Rome, mandated a return to orthodoxy of the Chalcedonian kind. John presents a series of edifying sayings and stories, told to him by monks in Egypt, who came from Scete (near the Nitrian Desert), Antioch and other places. Some of them had fled from 'the barbarians' during the Persian wars. Many of John's stories concern visions received by monks: of Jesus, 'a man of awesome appearance'; of the Mother of God ('Theotokos') chastising heretics; the devil (in disguise or not); angels, who usually appeared as handsome young men; and saints, including John the Divine and John the Baptist. Other less likely characters include the murdered baby who appeared to a bandit to rebuke him.[32]

Several of these visions are aimed at convincing followers of Severus or Nestorius—opponents of Leo the Great's two-nature formula that was endorsed by the Council of Chalcedon (451)—of their mistake, and persuading or scaring them back to orthodoxy.[33] Others reinforced the Chalcedonian cause, as in Leo the Great's appearance to Eustathios, the servant of Anastasius of Antioch (561–571 and 593–599), commending the patriarch for his loyalty to Leo the Great against the so-called Monophysites.[34] These dreams pre-figure the extensive use of dreams to reinforce orthodoxy in Byzantine chronicles.

4 Byzantine Chronicles

When it comes to early Byzantine chronicles, we must acknowledge that they can be to varying degrees hagiographic. As Calofonos observed, "Byzantine historiography—and chronography still more—has succumbed to [hagiography's] influence from the very beginning."[35]

31 Neil 2006, 183–193.

32 *Pratum spirituale* 166 (PG 87.3, 3023C). See also PG 87.3, 2864A, 2865C, 2872B, 2900A, 2916C, 2917A, 2964A, 2992–3A, 2996A.

33 *Pratum spiritual* 26 (PG 87.3, 2872B–2873A). On John's involvement in Christological struggles of this period see Booth 2014.

34 *Pratum spirituale* 149 (PG 87.3, 3013B–C).

35 Calofonos 2014, 119.

4.1 *Malalas*

Prophetic dreams appeared in Byzantine chronicles from as early as John Malalas in the 6th century.[36] Such was the emperor Anastasius' vision of an angel who struck off fourteen years of the emperor's life because of his 'insatiability'. The warning delivered in Anastasius' vision was reinforced by his *cubicularius*, Amantius, who dreamed on the same night that, "I was standing facing your majesty, and from behind me a pig, as big as a wild boar, pulled me to the ground and killed me by trampling on me and devouring me."[37] The philosopher Proclus was called in to interpret these disturbing dreams, and announced that they both would die soon. This is fact happened 'shortly afterwards', making way for the rule of Justin I.

4.2 *Theophanes Confessor*

Theophanes repeated Malalas' story of the two dreams with one crucial change: instead of "because of your insatiability", Theophanes has "because of your erroneous beliefs".[38] Calofonos reads this as part of Theophanes' rhetoric of punishment for heterodoxy, but there is nothing in Malalas' account of Anastasius to suggest that he was unorthodox. Rather he instituted "excellent order" over the rioting masses by "countless executions".[39] This textual fluidity highlights the problem with related dreams: they could be manipulated at will. Authorial agenda are thus crucial background for any contemporary historian.

There is another addition by Theophanes in his retelling of the familiar story of Constantine's vision of the Cross shortly before his victorious battle against Maxentius. Theophanes alleges that "the great Constantine feared the sorcery of Maxentius, who cut up new-born babes for his lawless divination". It was while he was in distress that he received his vision of the cross made of light and heard the imperative: "In this [sign], conquer!".[40] The divine vision is thus endorsed by being held up against the wicked practice of divination by Maxentius. The new kind of divination is sanctioned, the old is not.

Theophanes, a direct or indirect dependant of Theophilus of Edessa, in the west Syrian tradition,[41] also used this motif in the defeat of Constans at

36 Malalas, *Chron.* 16.20 (Thurn 2000, 408; trans. Jeffreys et al. 1986, 229). See Roger Scott's chapter in this volume.

37 Malalas, *Chron.* 16.20 (Thurn 2000, 409; trans. Jeffreys et al. 1986, 229).

38 Theophanes, *Chron.* AM 6010 (de Boor 1972, 164; trans. Mango and Scott 1997, 248).

39 Malalas, *Chron.* 16.20 (Thurn 2000, 408; trans. Jeffreys et al. 1986, 228).

40 Theophanes, *Chron.* AM 5794 (de Boor 1972, 14; trans. Mango and Scott 1997, 23).

41 Hoyland 2011, 34. Hoyland used Theophanes and other dependent sources such as the *Chronicle of Siirt* (see below) and that of Michael the Syrian to reconstruct Theophilus of Edessa's *Chronicle*.

Phoenix in 654/655. Theophanes recounts how Constans had a dream the night before his sea battle in which he was at Thessaloniki. He sent for a dream interpreter who warned him that this meant he would "give victory to another", according to a loose derivation of the toponym Thessaloniki (θης-ἀλλο-νίκην).[42] The Romans were duly defeated. Hoyland links this negative interpretation with Constans' support for the heresy of monothelitism,[43] but that is not evidenced at this place in the text, but rather in the overall narrative of Constans' reign, which is sympathetic to the dyothelites whom he persecuted, and judges his ignominious end as just deserts. It may be asking too much of the reader (Byzantine or otherwise) to expect them to remember from much earlier in the narrative that Constantine the Great had a dream in which his belief was rewarded with victory, the sort of intertextuality that Calofonos sees at work in Constans' vision.[44] Calofonos notes that eight out of the thirteen visions in Theophanes pertained to royalty,[45] and this is evidence of the use they were put to in legitimising (or in the case of Constans, delegitimising) authority, both spiritual and temporal.

It is interesting to note that, in Theophanes' imaginative account of the beginnings of Muhammad's mission,[46] he attributes the Prophet's claim of revelations from the angel Gabriel to his desire to hide his epileptic fits from his rich wife, Khadija.[47] According to Theophanes, it was to cover this shameful weakness that Muhammad claimed he had been overwhelmed by visions of the archangel Gabriel.[48] Khadija was more inclined to believe her husband's account after a monk friend told her that Gabriel commonly appeared to prophets, and thus Muhammad's claim to prophetic authority was born, according to Theophanes. In the same entry of his *Chronicle* for the year 629/30, Theophanes maintains that Muhammad had brought back his ideas from

42 This story is repeated in the *Chronicle* of Kedrenos, 451 (Tartaglia 2016, 718): see the previous chapter by Roger Scott, n. 31, and his Appendix: "Dreams and visions in Kedrenos".

43 Hoyland 2011, 141 n. 342.

44 Calofonos 2010, 140. See Scott 1994, esp. 62–63. Scott 1981, 69, pointed out that Theophanes' chronicle, an annalistic account of the period 284–813, is organised around one principle: 'the history of individual emperors whose success or failure depended on their piety.'

45 Calofonos 2010, 143, with a list at n. 39.

46 Theophanes, *Chron.* AM 6122 (629/30 CE) (de Boor 1883, 333–334).

47 Neil 2013, 225, discusses this passage in the context of Theophanes as one of very few Greek sources on the origins of Islam.

48 Theophanes, *Chron.* AM 6122 (de Boor 1883, 333–334). On Theophanes' account of Muhammad's origins and early years, see Neil 2013, 225–226.

Palestine, "where he consorted with Jews and Christians and sought from them certain scriptural matters".[49]

4.3 *Theophanes Continuatus*

As in the Islamic texts we saw above, dreams could lead to conversion, or retrospectively justify it, as in the following example from the continuator of Theophanes, concerning the elderly emperor Romanos Lekapenos (920–944), who saw a vision of his own judgement after death.[50] Romanos was only saved from an imaginary death by the intervention of the Theotokos, a common motif in such apocalyptic visions.[51] Another common type of dream found in both Byzantine and medieval Islamic historical accounts are dreams that occur before momentous events, such as an important battle. These accounts retrospectively justify the outcome (*vaticinia ex eventu*).[52]

4.4 *Theophylact Simocatta*

Theophylact Simocatta relates several of these *vaticinia ex eventu*, although he usually refers to dreams as absurd vanities.[53] For example, there are the visions of the young pagan woman Golinduch at Hierapolis who experienced a 'divine ecstasy' that allowed her to see blessings being poured out on the Christians and destruction for the Persians.[54] Later she saw an 'illumination of another and greater manifestation', an angel who predicted the imminent death of her tyrannical pagan husband.[55] She subsequently converted to Christianity and 'made many predictions about what would befall Khosrau, and revealed his approach to the Romans before the commencement of the events'.[56] Theophylact also quotes a letter from Chosroes II to the martyr Sergius in which the king related a dream that Sergius had appeared to him three times promising that he would conceive a child by the Christian woman

49 Theophanes, *Chron.* AM 6122 (de Boor 1883, 333–334.) All translations of Theophanes are taken from Mango and Scott 1997.

50 Calofonos 2014, 115–117. Several other dream visions in Theophanes Continuatus (there are thirteen in all) refer to royalty, either endorsing them (as in the case of Michael III) or condemning them to punishment.

51 For more examples of 'tours of the other world' from various saints' *Lives* of the tenth and eleventh centuries, see Cupane 2014, 54–62; and on the *Apocalypses* of Anastasia and of the Theotokos, see Neil 2016.

52 Mahallati 2008, 156; Olster 2003; Strickler 2018 (see esp. chapter 2).

53 Theophylact Simocatta, *Historia* (de Boor and Wirth 1972). For further examples, cf. Strickler in this volume.

54 Theophylact, 12.3–4 (trans. Whitby 1986, 148).

55 Theophylact, 12.6–7 (trans. Whitby 1986, 148).

56 Theophylact, 12.15 (trans. Whitby 1986, 149).

Seirem.[57] Another example from Theophylact is the dream of Peter, which affirmed God's support for the usurper Phocas against Maurice, and was then confirmed by natural phenomena.[58]

4.5 *Chronicle of Siirt*

In the *Chronicle of Siirt*, composed between 906 and 1020,[59] it is related that before Heraclius advanced against the Persians who had invaded Byzantine territories in the East, the Byzantine emperor dreamt of the Persian king Khosrau charging at him on an elephant, striking him and putting him to flight. The Byzantine emperor took this as a sign that he would lose if he engaged the Persian forces. Later, Heraclius dreamt that he was riding an elephant and chasing Khosrau, "and knew that God would give him power over him", so he decided to go ahead and attack.[60] In the end, the Byzantine forces were victorious and managed to retrieve the relic of the True Cross from the Persian capital of Ctesiphon in 626.[61] Such stories, whether apocryphal or not, confirm Hoyland's conclusion that "a lot more historical material was circulating between the Muslim and Christian communities than is usually assumed".[62] Thus it is no surprise that they shared a common tradition that regarded dreams as portents.

5 Early Islamic Chronicles

Although there was already an established tradition of Muslim history-writing by the mid-8th century,[63] we have to wait for the mid-9th for the first extant

57 Theophylact, 5.14.7 (trans. Whitby 1986, 152). These events took place c. 593/4, when the author was a young boy—he was born in Egypt probably in the 580s. Theophylact remains the most important source for the wars waged by Byzantine emperors in the Balkans and the East in the late 6th century.

58 Theophylact 8.6.5–6 (trans. Whitby 1986, 218). See Whitby 1988, 169.

59 This Christian chronicle from the Sasanian (Persian) empire based in mod. Iraq goes up to the year 650. See Wood 2013, 1–30.

60 *Chron Siirt* LXXXVII, 540–41 (Hoyland 2011, 72–73).

61 Heraclius' decree against the Jews and their forced baptism in 632 appears in a number of sources (but not Theophanes) in connection with his prediction/dream about the Roman empire being overrun by a circumcised people: see Hoyland 2014, 218.

62 Hoyland 2011, 29–30.

63 Hoyland 2011, 29–30. Hoyland also suggests that this Armenian chronicle was influenced not by the Greek tradition, which had fallen into disuse after the Arab invasions of Byzantine territories, but by the west Syriac tradition exemplified by Theophilus of Edessa: Hoyland 2011, 31–32. "Any direct influence upon the Arabic tradition seems

example of an annalistic history or chronicle (*ta'rīkh 'alā l-sinīn* "history according to the years"). Other chronicles are known but have not survived.[64] The earliest example is the *History* of Khalifa ibn Khayyat (c. 777–854 CE), which Hoyland describes as 'a full marriage between historical narratives and official annals'.[65] Over half the work concerns the Umayyad dynasty (660–750). The author, born in Basra, Iraq, gives a more positive assessment of the Umayyad caliphs than later narratives, as noted by its translator Carl Wurtzel.[66] However, there are no dreams or visions in the chronicle of Khalifa ibn Khayyat.

5.1 *The History* (*Tariq*) *of Al-Tabarī*

It is in the *History of the Prophets and Kings* of Muhammad ibn Jarir al-Tabarī (d. 923) that we first see dreams used as narrative and authenticating devices, although at least three earlier historical works served as sources for Al-Tabarī. One was the *Futuh al-Buldan* (*The Origins of the Islamic State*) by Baladhuri (d. 892). Another was *Muruj al-Dhahab* (*The Meadows of Gold: the Abbasids*) of al-Mas'udi (d. 956). The *Book of Countries* by Al-Ya'qubi (d. c. 900) was his third significant source.

Let us conclude with a few examples of portentous dreams from the *History* of Al-Tabarī. The first example concerns Abū Ja'far's takeover from the former caliph Abū Muslim. The usurpation is authenticated by a third party, Ismail ibn Ali, who had a premonitory dream which echoes the Qur'anic account of Abraham's attempted sacrifice of Ismail. After Abū Ja'far had slain his rival, he called in Ismail ibn Ali's former supporters to declare their allegiance:

> Then Abu Jafar gave permission for Ismail b. Ali to enter, who came in and said: 'Commander of the Faithful, last night I dreamt that you had sacrificed a ram and I kicked it with my foot.' Abu Jafar said: 'Your eye slept, Abu al-Hasan; rise and see your dream come true. God has slain the sinner.' Ismail went to the place where Abu Muslim lay, and kicked him.'[67]

This was the first day of Abū Ja'far's caliphate (754 CE). Al-Tabarī himself died in 923 CE, so was writing at some distance from the events he described. There

---

unlikely, however, given the conspicuous absence of Arabic translations of Byzantine historical works" (31).

64 Two earlier Muslim chronicles (*ta'rīkh 'alā l-sinīn*), those of al-Haytham ibn 'Adi (d. 822) and Abū Hassan al-Ziyadi (d. 857), do not survive.

65 Hoyland 2011, 31. The work is edited by al-'Umari 1967 and Zakkar 1968. See Rosenthal 1968, 71–90, on the history of the annalistic form.

66 Wurtzel and Hoyland 2015, viii.

67 Al-Tabarī, *The Early 'Abbāsī Empire* (de Goeje et al. 1879–1901, 116; trans. Williams 1988, 24).

are many other such accounts in his forty-volume world history, including the familiar tale of generals receiving divine endorsement of their decisions to attack.[68] Al-Tabarī reported a dream narrative from his father to encourage the father of a young student (and incidentally Al-Tabarī's future biographer) to continue his son's education. Al-Tabarī wrote of his father's dream thus:[69]

> My father … saw me standing before the Prophet with a bag filled with stones, and I was spreading some of them in front of him. A dream interpreter told my father that the dream signified that I would be a good Muslim as an adult and a strong defender of the religious law of the Prophet. As a consequence, my father was ready to support my studies when I was still a small boy.

As Rosenthal comments, it hardly matters whether al-Tabarī's account of his father's dream is true or not; dreams were commonly used to express basic convictions.[70] Al-Tabarī's conviction was that the Prophet himself had endorsed his path of historical and religious scholarship. In contrast to Theophanes, the hadith scholar did not take it upon himself to show God's providence rewarding the good and destroying the bad; rather he compiled records of events from reliable witnesses.[71] He even presented alternative Jewish and Christian accounts of some events where these differed from his pre-Islamic sources, for example their account of Nebuchadnezzar destroying Jerusalem with Roman aid as punishment for Herod's beheading of John the Baptist[72] (an ahistorical account!). Al-Tabarī is almost entirely silent on the Arab conquest of Egypt and where he does make mention of isolated incidents his dates are often confused.[73] On the latter point he is like Theophanes, who was a better source

68 E.g. *The History of Al-Tabarī*, vol. 5, trans. Bosworth 1999, 7 (Ardashir's dream that he would be given rulership); trans. Bosworth 1999,169 (Tubba's three dreams about covering the Ka'bah); trans. Bosworth 1999, 178–179 (Rabiah b. Nasr's dream prophesying the Abyssinian invasion of South Arabia which prompted the people to emigrate from Yemen to al-Hirah: a story of origins for the Southern Arabian Lakhmid people in Iraq). Rabiah b. Nasr refused to even give the details of his disturbing dream to the diviners who were called in, so two top soothsayers were called upon to tell the dream and interpret it: Satih's interpretation (trans. Bosworth 1999, 179–181) and Shiqq's interpretation (trans. Bosworth 1999, 181–182) matched, so the king took action to move his people to Iraq.

69 Rosenthal 1989, 15, n. 41 citing al-Tabarī's *Irshad*.

70 Rosenthal 1989, 15.

71 Williams 1988, xvi–xvii.

72 Williams 1988, xvii–xviii.

73 For ninth- and tenth-century sources on the Arab conquest of Egypt and the last thirty years of Roman rule, see Butler and Fraser 1978, xi–xiv.

on the conquest of Egypt and the aid offered to the Arabs by the Alexandrian patriarch, the monothelite Cyrus.[74]

Finally, in relation to the birth of Muhammad, al-Tabarī relates the Prophet's account of a dream his mother had while she was pregnant, that she was carrying a light in her womb that would shine from East to West.[75] This signified that she was to bear a prophet for the whole world. According to the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, similar apparitions appeared to Mary, the mother of Jesus, and to Joseph her betrothed.[76] Both messages from the archangel Gabriel certified that the son Mary bore was no mistake, but the future saviour of his people.

6 Conclusion

In both the hagiographic and historiographic traditions of Byzantium and Islam, dreams had personal *and* social significance. Their retelling could thus serve any number of changing spiritual and political ends since, in the Byzantine and Islamic worlds, the spiritual *was* the political. It was natural that such a useful literary tool continued to be applied in early Islamic chronicles and legitimising narratives from at least the 10th century onward. In Byzantine and Islamic hagiography we have found examples of dreams exercising all the functions identified by Marlow: cautionary, edificatory, didactic, legitimising authority, and offering polemical instruction for saints and their followers.[77]

By extension, early Byzantine chronographers employed the same narrative and instructive functions of dreams, set in an imperial or royal context. While we find satanic dreams in hagiography and perhaps once in the Qur'an (the dream of Abraham), in Byzantine and Islamic chronography we find only veridical dreams. All dreams associated with appearances of holy figures, including the Prophet, the angel Gabriel, and the martyr Sergius, are veridical. Few Muslim historiographers, it seems, are as blatant as Theophanes in rearranging the sources to demonstrate the divine economy at work in the persons of their rulers, whether good or bad. Their concern is rather with the legitimate origins of Muhammed, of the four caliphs, and of their own authorship, all of which could be handily endorsed by dreams.

74 Neil 2013, 226.

75 *The History of Al-Tabarī*, vol. 5 (de Goeje et al. 1879–1901, 974; trans. Bosworth 1999, 276).

76 Matt. 1:18–25 (Joseph); Luke 1:26–33 (Mary).

77 Marlow 2008b, 11.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

Al-Bukhārī (1958) Ed. A. M. Shākir, *Saḥīḥ* (Cairo).

Al-Hakim Al-Tirmidhī (1996) Trans. B. Radtke and J. O'Kane, *The Concept of Sainthood in Early Islamic Mysticism: Two Works by Al-Hakim Al-Tirmidhi. An Annotated Translation and Introduction* (Richmond; repr. 2013).

Al-Ṭabarī (1879–1901) Eds M. J. de Goeje et al., *Ta'rīkh ar-rusul wa-l-mulūk* (Leiden). Trans. J. A. Williams (1988) *Al-Ṭabarī: The Early 'Abbāsī Empire. Vol. 1, The Reign of Abū Ja'Far Al-Maṇsūr A.D. 754–77. Vol. 2, The Son and Grandsons of al-Mansur, the Reigns of al-Mahdi, al-Hadi, and Harun al-Rashid* (Cambridge). Trans. F. Rosenthal (1989) *The History of Al-Tabarī, General Introduction and From the Creation to the Flood. Vol. 1* (Albany, NY). Trans. C. E. Bosworth (1999) *History of Al-Tabarī. Vol. 5: The Sasanids, the Byzantines, the Lakhmids, and Yemen* (Albany, NY).

Kedrenos, George (2016) *Synopsis Historion*. Ed. L. Tartaglia, *Georgii Cedreni Historiarum Compendium* (Rome).

Khalifa ibn Khayyat (1967) Ed. A. D. Al-'Umari, *al-Ta'rīkh* (an-Najaf). Ed. S. Zakkar (1968) *Al-Ta'rīkh* (Damascus). Trans. C. Wurtzel and ed. R. Hoyland (2015) *Khalifa ibn Khayyat's History on the Umayyad Dynasty (660–750)*, TTH 63 (Liverpool).

Malalas, John (2000) Ed. I. Thurn, *Chronographia*, CFHB 35 (Berlin). Trans. E. Jeffreys, M. Jeffreys, R. Scott (1986) *The Chronicle of John Malalas. A Translation*, ByzA 4 (Melbourne).

Meskīn, Mo'īn al-Dīn Farāhi Haravī (1985) *Tafsīr-i Ḥadā'iq al-ḥaqā'iq.* Ed. S. J. Sajjādī (Tehran).

Moschus, John. *Pratum Spirituale.* PG 87.3.

Theophanes Confessor (1883) Ed. C. de Boor, *Theophanis Chronographia*, vol. 1 (Leipzig; repr. Hildesheim, NY, 1980). Trans. C. Mango and R. Scott with G. Greatrex, *The Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor: Byzantine and Near-Eastern History, AD 284–813* (Oxford).

Theophilus of Edessa (2011) Trans. R. Hoyland, *Theophilus of Edessa's* Chronicle *and the Circulation of Historical Knowledge*, TTH 57 (Liverpool).

Theophylact Simocatta (1972) Ed. C. de Boor, *Theophylacti Simoccatae Historiae* (Leipzig, 1887). Rev edn. P. Wirth (Stuttgart). Trans. M. and M. Whitby (1986) *The History of Theophylact Simocatta: An English Translation with Introduction* (Oxford).

Secondary Sources

Abuo-Almajd, A. R. (2013), 'Iain Edgar and Abdur-Rahman Abuo-Almajd in dialog about Prophet Muhammad in dreams', at www.en.alukah.net/World_Muslims/0/1661/ (posted 7/1/2013; accessed 5/9/2017).

Angelidi, C. and Calofonos, G. T. (eds) (2014) *Dreaming in Byzantium and Beyond* (Farnham and Burlington, VT).

Booth, P. (2014) *Crisis of Empire. Doctrine and Dissent at the End of Late Antiquity* (Berkeley).

Bulkeley, K. (2008) *Dreaming in the World's Religions: A Comparative History* (New York, NY).

Butler, A. J. and Fraser, P. M. (eds) (1978) *The Arab Conquest of Egypt and the Last Thirty Years of the Roman Dominion*, 2nd edn (Oxford).

Calofonos, G. T. (2010) 'Dream Narratives in Historical Writing: Making Sense of History in Theophanes' *Chronographia*', in R. Makrides (ed.) *Byzantine Literature* (Birmingham), 133–144.

Calofonos, G. T. (2014) 'Dream Narratives in the Continuation of Theophanes', in Angelidi and Calofonos 2014, 95–123.

Coltart, N. (1991) *Slouching Towards Bethlehem and Further Psychoanalytic Explorations* (London).

Cupane, C. (2014) 'The Heavenly City: Religious and Secular Visions of the Other World in Byzantine Literature', in Angelidi and Calofonos 2014, 53–68.

Edgar, I. (2011) *The Dream in Islam: From Qur'anic Tradition to Jihadist Inspiration.*

Felek, Ö. and Knysh, A. D. (eds) (2012) *Dreams and Visions in Islamic Societies* (Albany, NY).

Green, N. (2003) 'The Religious and Cultural Roles of Dreams and Visions in Islam', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, Third Series*, 13.3, 287–313.

Hoyland, R. (2014) *Seeing Islam as Others Saw It: A Survey and Evaluation of Christian, Jewish and Zoroastrian Writings on Early Islam*, Studies in Late Antiquity and Early Islam 13 (Princeton, NJ).

Islamic Lifestyle and Social Issues (2017), at www.ummah.com/forum/archive/index.php/t-99845.html (accessed 5/9/2017).

Katz, J. G. (2012) 'Dreams and their Interpretation in Sufi Thought and Practice', in Felek and Knysh 2012, 181–198.

Kenny, M. (1996) 'Distinguishing between Dreams and Visions in Ninth-century Hagiography', *Gouden Hoorn: Tijdschrift over Byzantium* 4/1 (n.p.), at https://gouden hoorn.com/2011/11/21/distinguishing-between-dreams-and-visions-in-ninth-century-hagiography/ (accessed 30/12/2017).

Kinberg, L. (2012) 'Dreams Online. Contemporary Appearances of the Prophet in Dreams', in Felek and Knysh 2012, 139–157.

Krönung, B. (2014) 'Ecstasy as a Form of Visionary Experience in Early Byzantine Monastic Literature', in Angelidi and Calofonos 2014, 35–52.

Lamoreaux, J. C. (2002) *The Early Muslim Tradition of Dream Interpretation* (Albany, NY).

Lamoreaux, J. C. (2008) 'An Early Muslim Autobiographical Dream Narrative: Abū Ja'far al-Qāyinī and His Dream of the Prophet Muhammad', in Marlow 2008a, 78–98.

MacAlister, S. (1992) 'Gender as Sign and Symbolism in Artemidorus' *Oneirocritica*: Social Aspirations and Anxieties', *Helion* 19, 140–160.

Magdalino, P. (2014) 'The Historiography of Dreaming in Medieval Byzantium', in Angelidi and Calofonos 2014, 125–144.

Mahallati, M. J. (2008) 'The Significance of Dreams and Dream Interpretation in the Qu'ran: Two Sufi Commentaries on *Surat Yusuf*', in Marlow 2008a, 153–178.

Marlow, L. (ed.) (2008a) *Dreaming Across Boundaries. The Interpretation of Dreams in Islamic Lands* (Washington, DC).

Marlow, L. (2008b), 'Introduction', in Marlow 2008a, 1–24.

Mavroudi, M. (2002) *A Byzantine Book on Dream Interpretation: The Oneirocriticon of Achmet and its Arabic Sources*, The Medieval Mediterranean: Peoples, Economics and Cultures 400–1453, vol. 36 (Leiden).

Mavroudi, M. (2014) 'Byzantine and Islamic Dream Interpretation: A Comparative Approach to the Problem of "Reality" vs. "Literary Tradition"', in Angelidi and Calofonos 2014, 161–186.

Neil, B. (2006) 'The Miracles of Saints Cyrus and John', *Journal of the Australian Early Medieval Association* 2, 183–193.

Neil, B. (2013) 'The Earliest Greek Understandings of Islam: John of Damascus and Theophanes the Confessor', in W. Mayer and B. Neil (eds) *Religious Conflict from Early Christianity to the Rise of Islam*, Arbeiten zur Kirchengeschichte 121 (Berlin), 215–228.

Neil, B. (2016) 'Studying Dream Interpretation from Early Christianity to the Rise of Islam', *Journal of Religious History* 40.1, 17–39.

Neil, B. (forthcoming) 'Dreams, Prophecy and Contemplation in Origen of Alexandria's *Contra Celsum*', in E. Arteimi and M. Edwards (eds), *Praying and Contemplating from Classical to Late Antiquity* (Tübingen).

Oberhelman, S. M. (1991) *The Oneirocriticon of Achmet: A Medieval Greek and Arabic Treatise on the Interpretation of Dreams* (Lubbock, Texas).

Oberhelman, S. M. (2008) *Dreambooks in Byzantium: Six Oneirocritica in Translation, with Commentary and Introduction* (Abingdon).

Oberhelman, S. M. (2013) (ed.) *Dreams, Healing and Medicine in Greece from Antiquity to the Present* (Farnham).

Oberhelman, S. M. (2014) 'The Dream-Key Manuals of Byzantium', in Angelidi and Calofonos 2014, 145–159.

Olster, D. M. (2003) 'Byzantine Apocalypses', in B. McGinn, J. J. Collins and S. J. Stein (eds) *The Continuum History of Apocalypticism* (New York), 254–272.

Peters, F. (2003) *Islam, A Guide for Jews and Christians* (Leiden).

Rosenthal, F. (1968) *A History of Muslim Historiography*, 2nd edn (Leiden).

Scott, R. (1981) 'The Classical Tradition in Byzantine Historiography', in M. Mullett and R. Scott (eds) *Byzantium and the Classical Tradition* (Birmingham), 61–74; repr. in Scott 2012, III.

Scott, R. (1994) 'The Image of Constantine in Malalas and Theophanes', in P. Magdalino (ed.) *New Constantines, The Rhythm of Imperial Renewal in Byzantium, 4th–13th Centuries: Papers from the Twenty-sixth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, St Andrews, March 1992* (Aldershot), 57–71; repr. in Scott 2012, XV.

Scott, R. (2012) *Byzantine Chronicles and the Sixth Century.* Variorum Reprints (Farnham).

Strickler, R. (2018) 'Coping with Crisis: Invasion, Defeat, and Apocalyptic Discourse in Seventh-Century Byzantium'. Unpublished PhD thesis (Macquarie University, Sydney).

Whitby, M. (1988) *The Emperor Maurice and his Historian: Theophylact Simocatta on Persian and Balkan Warfare* (Oxford).

Wood, P. (2013) *The Chronicle of Seert. Christian Historical Imagination in Late Antique Iraq.* Oxford Early Christian Studies (Oxford).

CHAPTER 11

Psellos' Use and Counter-Use of Dreams, Visions and Prophecies in His *Chronographia* and His *Encomium for His Mother*

Penelope Buckley

Dreams, visions and prophecies have been part of Byzantium's narrative of itself since Constantine the Great: they figure across genre lines, including historiography, and they Christianise older traditions of dream and prophecy in various ways and to various degrees. This article will consider Psellos' use of Byzantine practice in two texts: the reign of Constantine Monomachos in his *Chronographia*, and his *Encomium for his Mother*.

Clearly, genre is a factor in the differences between the two, but it is hardly prescriptive, least of all in Psellos' hands. In any case, there are no strict rules: other historians treat dreams, visions and prophecies with more respect for their cultural status than Psellos does in the *Chronographia*, while he himself makes much of them in some orations but little in others.[1] Psellos plays with genre like glitterwax[2] so, for the time, I shall leave genre as an open question and look more closely at the differences among the roles Psellos himself assumes within these texts. I have chosen to approach the two works at face value,[3] aiming to see how dreams, visions and prophecies function within the larger interaction of their visibly conflicting elements.

1 See e.g. the orations in Kaldellis and Polemis 2015.

2 A wondrous substance—translucent, sparkly and malleable—that preceded plasticine.

3 Rather than offering to say what he 'really' thinks or means. Kaldellis (1999) has traced what he sees as a consistent sub-text and subversive structure in the *Chronographia*, and Walker (2004) has given a near-magisterial revisionist account of the *Encomium* (closely matched by Kaldellis 2006). All these readings, however, are punctured, at critical points, by pre-emptive interpretations, where the writer confidently overrules what is apparent in favour of what he sees as a sub-surface counter-case representing Psellos' 'real' and stable views. e.g. "Yet could he sincerely believe …?" (Kaldellis 1999, 101); "His genuine views are often inconspicuous, hidden away …" (Kaldellis 1999, 105); "We can guess already at Psellos' real attitude …" (Walker 2004, 80); "What Psellos really thinks … is, again, easily guessed." (Walker 2004, 84). Neither of these interesting and persuasive cases can be proved, and Kaldellis does acknowledge Psellos' agility and changeability (Kaldellis 1999, 195) together with the risks involved in interpreting any text of his in the light of another. "Psellos has constructed a labyrinth of

© KONINKLIJKE BRILL NV, LEIDEN, 2018 | DOI:10.1163/9789004375710_013

Dreams are notably absent from the *Chronographia* and prophecies are few, but they are mentioned in its history of Constantine IX, and their treatment there illuminates their absence or downgrading elsewhere. By contrast, dreams and visions dominate Psellos' *Encomium for his Mother*. Nevertheless, the oration has strange common ground with the first text. In both, Psellos calls attention to his own roles to an extraordinary degree. In each, he acknowledges a great debt—to his mother for his formation, to his favourite emperor for his entry into public life and the opportunity to perfect his abilities. Both works show uneasiness and strain in these relations: in each, Psellos explicitly, persistently, distinguishes himself, finally diverging from his benefactor; and each includes a lengthy autobiography, amounting to a manifesto. I shall argue that dreams and visions in these works do not appear at random, or as givens, and that their negative and positive charges can act as guides to interpreting each text as a whole.

The reign of Constantine IX in the *Chronographia* is marked, in Walker's term, by 'doubleness'.[4] Psellos describes this Constantine both as the emperor most naturally suited to ruling,[5] and as a main cause of the Empire's wasteful luxury and degeneracy after Basil II.[6] He blames and praises Constantine by turns, gratitude colouring the praise and disappointment making criticism savage. The dreams and prophecies in this text are several but vague, apart from one: a dream reported in detail by the emperor's close companion, whom Psellos calls an 'actor' and portrays as a buffoon.[7] This 'dream' concerns the recovery of an allegedly stolen horse, and is imaginary: the man is tired of being closeted with the emperor and wants a few hours on the town. The episode introduces the *false dream*, the idea that dreams may be invented for gain and cannot be disproved.

The other dreams and prophecies are all about the emperor, amounting to a general intimation of good luck or divine favour. They are introduced when a storm defeats a Russian sea-attack, and all purport to reassure him that he will not lose power or a war.

> ἐλέγετο γοῦν παρὰ πολλοῖς (ὧν ἐγὼ τοὺς λόγους διακριβούμενος, οὐδὲ μίαν ἐπιστήμην· ἢ ἀρχὴν εὕρισκον τῆς προρρήσεως)—ἐλέγετο γοῦν, ὡς πολλὰ μὲν μέλλει ἐπαναστήσασθαι τῷ βασιλεῖ τούτῳ δεινὰ, τὰ μὲν ἔξωθεν· καὶ παρὰ τῆς

mutually contradictory doctrines which contains no passage to the center of his own beliefs." (Kaldellis 1999, 191).

4 Walker 2004, 76, uses it of the *Encomium in matrem*.

5 Βασιλεῖ πρέπουσαν. Psellos, *Chron.* 6.169 (Reinsch 2014, 183).

6 Psellos, *Chron.* 6.48 (Reinsch 2014, 126).

7 ὁ ὑποκριτής; ὁ σκηνουργός. Psellos, *Chron.* 6.141 (Reinsch 2014, 170).

> βαρβαρικῆς μερίδος· τά δ' ἀπὸ τῆς ὑπηκόου τέως χειρός. φροῦδα δὲ πάντα γενήσεσθαι, τύχης τινὸς δεξιᾶς συναντιλαμβανομένης τῷ αὐτοκράτορι· καὶ πᾶσαν ἐπανάστασιν ῥᾳστα διαλυούσης. καὶ αὐτὸς δὲ ὁ αὐτοκράτωρ, ὁπότε προφητείαις τισὶ καὶ οἰωνίσμασι τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ἡγεμονίαν ἐσεμνολόγει, ὀπτασιῶν τέ τινων καὶ ὀνειράτων παραδόξων ἐμέμνητο, τὰ μὲν ὡς αὐτὸς ἰδὼν· τά δ' ὡς ἄλλων μαντευομένων ἀκροασάμενος· καὶ τὸ περὶ τούτου μέρος παραδοξολογῶν ἦν.
>
> It was said, at least, by many—though I myself, in examining their statements, found no scientific basis for the prophecy—it was *said*, at least, that many terrible things would arise against this emperor, some from outside and on the part of the barbarian, and some from regions subject at the time; but they would all vanish, with some good fortune helping the emperor and breaking up every insurrection with great ease. And whenever the emperor himself discussed prophecies and auguries about his reign, he recalled certain visions and extraordinary dreams, some seen by himself, others heard from diviners. He was wonderfully eloquent on this subject.[8]

Psellos pointedly repeats his caveat:

> ἐγὼ δέ, οὐδεμίαν μαντείας ἀφορμὴν παρὰ τῷ ἀνδρὶ ἐπιστάμενος, ψυχῆς τοῦτο ῥαθύμου καὶ ἀφρόντιδος τίθεμαι.
>
> But I know of no power of divination in this man; I attribute the idea to an easy-tempered and careless spirit.[9]

He elaborates the point further, at some length.[10]

Such dreams and prophecies characterise Constantine's attitude to everything and Psellos' principled dissent. Constantine is shown throughout as placid and unworried about his safety; he will hear no bad news, and even

8 Psellos, *Chron.* 6.96 (Reinsch 2014, 147).

9 Psellos, *Chron.* 6.97 (Reinsch 2014, 147).

10 He analyses three types of people: those who worry about everything, the simpler ones (χρηστότεροι), like the emperor, who worry about nothing and try (καταμαντεύονται) to persuade others to do the same, and a third putative group which is alert but not alarmed. He explains, τοσοῦτον δὲ προαναβαλόμην τῶν διηγήσεων, ἵν' ὁπότε λέγοιμι ἀφηγούμενος, ὡς προειρήκει ἢ ἀπεγνώκει ταῦτα ἢ ἐκεῖνα, μὴ μαντικὸν τὸν ἄνδρα ἡγήσωνται οἱ πολλοί. "I have strung out such a prelude to the story so that, whenever I may say in my narrative that he foretold or ignored this or that, they may not think the man a prophet". Psellos, *Chron.* 6.97 and 6.98 (Reinsch 2014, 148).

serious conversations must be led up to by pleasantries. He is credulous, a fantasist, who sees the empire as empowering him to enact his fantasies. Psellos, by contrast, presents himself as the sceptical analyst. While dreams cannot be disproved, they cannot be verified, and this disagreement over dreams alerts the reader to a larger pattern, an antiphonal, even antagonistic, movement between the men. The emperor, for instance, thinks that his refusal to place a guard outside his bedroom shows a praiseworthy trust in God. Psellos disagrees:

> ἐγὼ γοῦν πολλάκις τοὺς κυβερνήτας καὶ οἰκοδόμους ἀντιπαραθείς· καὶ τελευτῶν τοὺς λοχαγοὺς καὶ στρατηγούς, «οὐδεὶς μὲν οὖν τούτων» ἔφασκον «τῶν πρὸς Θεὸν ἐλπίδων ἔρημος τὸ οἰκεῖον ἔργον μεταχειρίζεται. ἀλλ᾽ ὅμως ὁ μὲν πρὸς κανόνα ἰσάζει τὸ οἰκοδόμημα· ὁ δὲ τοῖς πηδαλίοις ἰθύνει τὴν ναῦν· καὶ τῶν ἐν τοῖς πολέμοις ἕκαστος, ἀσπίδα τὲ φέρει καὶ ξιφηφορεῖ· καὶ τῇ μὲν κεφαλῇ, κράνος ἀρκεῖ· τὸ δὲ λοιπὸν σῶμα, ὁ θῶραξ ἀμπέχει.»
>
> I often made the comparison with helmsmen and builders, and finally of captains and generals. "Not one of these men," I said, "undertakes his particular task without placing his trust in God. Yet the one levels off his building with a rule, the other guides his ship with a rudder, and everyone who goes to war carries a shield and sword, and protects his head with a helmet, while the breastplate surrounds the rest of his body."[11]

The antiphony between their alternating views matches a tension in Psellos himself, between his roles as would-be panegyricist[12] and as historian, between his personal affection and his scarifying disagreements with the man. At Constantine's accession, Psellos was a coming man and, since Constantine loved oratory, Psellos was taken up, promoted and fêted. Yet Constantine is barely crowned when Psellos begins a dissertation on his reluctance to write the history at all:

> ἥκιστα βουλόμενος προστρίψασθαί τινα μῶμον αὐτῷ … καὶ ἣν ἐκάθηρα γλῶτταν, ἀφ᾽ ὧν ἐκεῖνος με πρὸς τοῦτο παρώρμησε, ταύτην ἐπ᾽ αὐτῷ θήξασθαι.
>
> Not wanting to lay any blame on him … [or] sharpen against him linguistic skills perfected through his encouragement.[13]

11 Psellos, *Chron.* 6.133 (Reinsch 2014, 166–167).

12 Stone (2011) gives a helpful sketch of Psellos' praise for Constantine in this genre.

13 Psellos, *Chron.* 6.23 (Reinsch 2014, 116–117).

Affection makes him say it is impossible for any emperor to please everyone or always govern well; yet Psellos' sense of being compromised is painful.

It is, in fact, a double biography. Even as the reign begins, in luxury and self-indulgence, Psellos embarks on his own life-history, detailing his investigations into every branch of learning and his serious contribution to Byzantine culture:

> ἐκπνεύσασαν τὴν σοφίαν καταλαβὼν … αὐτὸς ἀνεζωπύρησα οἴκοθεν … καί με ἄλλος εἰς ἄλλον παρέπεμπον … εἰς Ἀριστοτέλην καὶ Πλάτωνα … ἐς Πλωτίνους καὶ Πορφυρίους καὶ Ἰαμβλίχους … εἰς τὸν θαυμασιώτατον Πρόκλον … ἀριθμῶν τὲ μεθόδοις ἑαυτὸν ἐντείνας … ἔτι τὲ μουσικοῖς καὶ ἀστρονομικοῖς … καὶ αὐτός τι τῷ θείῳ συνεισφέρων πληρώματι. καὶ εἴ μέ τις …ἐπαινεῖν … βούλοιτο, … ὅτι μὴ ἐκ ῥεούσης πηγῆς, εἴ τί μοι σοφίας μέρος συνείλεκται, ἠρανισάμην· ἀλλ' ἐμπεφραγμένας εὑρηκώς, ἀνεστόμωσά τε καὶ ἀνεκάθηρα· καὶ ἐν βάθει ποῦ τὸ νᾶμα κείμενον, σὺν πολλῷ ἀνείλκυσα πνεύματι.
>
> Finding philosophy almost dead … I myself, by my own means, re-kindled it … One sent me to another … to Aristotle and Plato … to Plotinus and Porphyry and Iamblichus … the most admirable Proclus … I extended my investigations further, to systems of numbers … even to music and astronomy … And I myself contributed something to the sum of theology … and if anyone should want to praise me, let it be … that, if I have gathered any share of wisdom, I had it from no flowing fountain, but finding the sources blocked I cleared them, and wherever the stream lay deep, I brought it up with a great effort.[14]

His history reads as a corrective to the emperor's lack of thought; and this pattern of correction, seen in reference to the dreams, runs through the whole. Constantine has fallen on his feet, almost by chance. Psellos has worked at being the philosopher he is. Constantine squanders the empire's resources. Psellos rediscovers and reinvigorates them. In his own person, he is a corrective.

He tries continually to guide the emperor while disentangling himself from that emperor's delusions and mistakes. This, of course, involves disentangling himself from his own affections. Clearly, he loved Constantine's generosity. He responds with empathy to Constantine's enjoyments, especially of Psellos' own oratory: "He was at once so uplifted by my speech, he almost had to kiss me."[15]

14 Psellos, *Chron.* 6.37–42 (Reinsch 2014, 122).

15 καὶ μικροῦ με δεῖν κατεφίλησεν. οὕτω μου τῆς γλώττης εὐθὺς ἀπηώρητο. Psellos, *Chron.* 6.46 (Reinsch 2014, 125).

Psellos learns to read the ruler's moods and introduce his philosophy gently, but the climate that seemed so favourable increasingly is not. Incrementally, he shares his dilemma with the reader by inserting his presence in opposing ways. He is standing by, "speaking words of encouragement",[16] when the rebel army under Leo Tornikios mocks Constantine by singing and dancing below the City walls, but he is more critical—even contemptuous—about Constantine's generalship than are Attaleiates and Skylitzes. First Psellos had him sitting on the balcony with the empresses, ὀλίγον μὲν ἐμπνέον· βραχὺ δ' ἀναστένων, "breathing faintly and groaning a little".[17] When Constantine tries to manage events, "having first made this bad calculation, he then took it to people without experience in war."[18]

Skylitzes says nothing of the singing and dancing and, while critical of the strategy, is cooler and more respectful towards the emperor.[19] Attaleiates too gives a less colourful account: he attributes the new moat and stationing of an inexperienced soldiery outside the walls to the same desire to shield the emperor from hearing the insults, but does not ascribe the decision to the emperor himself, unlike Psellos: πόρρω τὲ στήσοι, ὥστε μὴ τῶν λεγομένων ἀκούειν, "he would station them far off, so as not to hear what was being said".[20] Attaleiates does not mention singing and dancing and he takes Constantine's efforts on the following day more seriously.[21]

Both had earlier placed Constantine at the head of the whole fleet when it moved to engage the Russians,[22] whereas Psellos placed him watching and directing the engagement from a hill.[23] Of the Maniakes affair, Psellos had said Constantine mismanaged it, sending as chief envoy "one of those from off the streets who pushed into the palace" and appointing as general a eunuch "taken seriously by no one".[24] Attaleiates made no such criticisms of Stephanos and

16 εἱστήκειν δ' ἐγὼ πλησίον αὐτῷ … τὰ δὲ λόγοις παραμυθούμενος. Psellos, *Chron.* 6.110 (Reinsch 2014, 156).

17 Psellos, *Chron.* 6.109 (Reinsch 2014, 155).

18 τοῦτο δὴ πρῶτον κακῶς λογισάμενος· εἶτα δὴ καὶ πρός τινας τῶν ἀπειροπολέμων ἐξενεγκών. Psellos, *Chron.* 6.112 (Reinsch 2014, 157).

19 Skylitzes, *Synopsis Hist.*, *Const. IX*, 8 (Thurn 1973, 440.16–441.45; Wortley 2010, 414).

20 Psellos, *Chron.* 6.112 (Reinsch 2014, 157).

21 Attaleiates, *The History*, 6.4–5, 6.8 (Kaldellis and Krallis 2012, 40–42, 46, from Tsolakis 2011, 19.21–20.20, 22.9–18).

22 ἀνῆλθε γὰρ καὶ αὐτὸς μετὰ τῆς βασιλικῆς νεώς, καὶ τὸ ἐνυάλιον ἀλαλάζαι προστάξας, ἐπῆλθε τοῖς ἐναντίοις, Attaleiates, *The History*, 5.3 (Kaldellis and Krallis 2012, 34, from Tsolakis 2011, 17.5–10); Skylitzes, *Synopsis Hist.*, *Const. IX*, 6 (Thurn 1973, 431.80–81; Wortley 2010, 406).

23 Psellos, *Chron.* 6.93 (Reinsch 2014, 146).

24 τῶν ἐκ τριόδων ἀθρόον ἐπεισπεσόντων εἰς τὰ βασίλεια, Psellos, *Chron.* 6.80 (Reinsch 2014, 139); οὐδενὶ δὲ τῶν πάντων σεμνολογούμενον, Psellos, *Chron.* 6.83 (Reinsch 2014, 140).

said nothing of the envoy,[25] and Skylitzes too was respectful of Stephanos and said that Maniakes was already in open rebellion when the protospatharios Pardos was sent out, not as envoy but to replace Maniakes. He was cool about Pardos, and the choice of him "to rule such a country for no better reason than that the emperor knew him",[26] but not openly contemptuous. Neither historian suggests that Constantine IX was incompetent or foolish.

Psellos "is acting officially as under-secretary"[27] when he shows Constantine turning courts of law into theatres of idiosyncracy and largesse. He tries to correct the emperor's statecraft by reworking his letters to the Sultan of Egypt—"giving one apparent meaning for the emperor, while trying to entrap the other"[28]—until the emperor thwarts him. Over the course of Constantine's fantastic amours, Psellos' private judgments become harsher, and he is scathing when the "actor" becomes imperial favourite.[29] Psellos has set his emperor up as one who, in valuing oratory, might be led to understand the need for a philosopher to guide the ruler,[30] but now finds that the emperor who embraced him for the beauty of his speech is equally charmed by a babbler: "he thought mistakes in speech highly entertaining."[31]

By the end, Psellos is grouping his still enthusiastic bursts of praise for the emperor under the aegis of the panegyric he declares he is not writing; he then intersects these praises with his actual judgments.[32] So the panegyrist might say that Constantine is wonderfully inventive, producing landscapes "as if from nothing, like the Creator",[33] but the historian, with Homeric gravitas, sees such extravagant inventiveness as unfitting for a ruler.[34] Constantine's church building is extensively described, with the kind of enthusiasm Psellos shows toward

25 Attaleiates, *The History*, 5.2 (Kaldellis and Krallis 2012, 32, from Tsolakis 2011, 16.9–16).

26 δι' ἄλλο μὲν οὐδὲν ἀγαθόν, ὅτι δὲ γνώριμος ἦν τῷ βασιλεῖ, τηλικαύτης χώρας ἄρχειν πεμφθείς, Skylitzes, *Synopsis Hist.*, *Const. IX*, 3 (Thurn 1973, 428.71; 428.72–74; Wortley 2010, 403, 402).

27 αὐτὸς πρὸ τῶν ἄλλων ὑπογραμματεύων, Psellos, *Chron.* 6.170 (Reinsch 2014, 183).

28 ἄλλο μὲν τὸ φαινόμενον τῷ κρατοῦντι διδοὺς. ἐλλοχῶν δὲ πρὸς ἐκεῖνον, Psellos, *Chron.* 6.190 (Reinsch 2014, 191).

29 ὁ αὐτοκράτωρ … ὅμως ἠγάπα παρ' ἐκείνου παιζόμενος. ἔνθεν τοι καὶ κατετρύφα τῆς τοῦ κρατοῦντος ἀβελτηρίας ὁ σκηνουργὸς· καὶ ἄλλό τι ἐπ' ἄλλῳ ἐπλάττετο, πρὸς τὸ εὔηθες ἐκείνῳ οἰκείως συναρμοζόμενος. "The emperor … loved being mocked by him, and so the actor made fun of the ruler's stupidity, and invented one thing after another suited to his simple nature." Psellos, *Chron.* 6.141 (Reinsch 2014, 170).

30 See Kaldellis 1999, 147–148; 152–154.

31 τὸ διημαρτημένον—τῆς παιδιᾶς τοῦτο ἐκεῖνος ἐτίθετο σπούδασμα, Psellos, *Chron.* 6.138 (Reinsch 2014, 169).

32 Psellos, *Chron.* 6.173 (Reinsch 2014, 184).

33 ὥσπερ ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων κατὰ τὸν πρῶτον δημιουργόν, Psellos, *Chron.* 6.175 (Reinsch 2014, 185).

34 οὐ βουληφόρῳ ἀνδρὶ προσήκοντα, Psellos, *Chron.* 6.175 (Reinsch 2014, 185).

great oratory: "The beautiful proportions, the correspondence of parts, the mingling and uniting of its graces."[35]

Yet this building is described as the emperor's worst, and most expensive, folly. Eventually, affection and trust fail, and Psellos leaves court. The prophecies which Constantine reports, and their rejection by Psellos, form a miniature of their joint history. Interestingly, he *introduces* them to the war-narrative, in a history generally lacking dreams and prophecies, and with no such reference in the parallel narratives of Skylitzes and Attaleiates. They are there to make a point. Psellos will not allow them verity, and he abandons an emperor who bases his rule and his morality on such self-serving imaginings.

Those rejected dreams and prophecies in Constantine IX's reign cast something of a spotlight on their absence, or discordance, elsewhere. The *Chronographia* pictures its sparse paraphenomena as a loose bundle of discreditable practices. They are either foolish and pathetic, as with Zoe's "magical practices, attaching little stones to her body"[36] and her "prophecies" from her Jesus-figurine,[37] or they tend towards the dark side: as with the omen and astrologers' advice ignored by Phokas[38] and their dire warning to Michael V;[39] the prophecies of the "Nazareans"[40] and the claims of those who engage in horoscopy and "split up our existence";[41] the "unspeakable rites" and "apparitions", and the "something forbidden"[42] said to have helped Michael IV to the throne. Even Isaak Komnenos is fearful of his fate (τύχη),[43] while Constantine Doukas discourages prophecies about his future.[44] The *Chronographia* gives no more purchase to magical or quasi-magical prognostications about imperial power or success than it does to the sinfulness of emperor or people or God's wrath when accounting for the weakening of the empire.[45] In this work,

35 τὸ ἰσόμετρον κάλλος· ἡ τῶν μερῶν ἀναλογία· ἡ τῶν χαρίτων μίξις καὶ κράσις. Psellos, *Chron.* 6.187 (Reinsch 2014, 190).

36 τελουμένη τὰ πλείω, καὶ ψηφίδας τινὰς προσαρμοζομένη τῷ σώματι, Psellos, *Chron.* 3.5 (Reinsch 2014, 33).

37 προκατήγγειλε τὸ ἐσόμενον, Psellos, *Chronographia*, 6.66 (Reinsch 2014, 134).

38 Psellos, *Chron.* 1.15 (Reinsch 2014, 9).

39 Psellos, *Chron.* 5.20 (Reinsch 2014, 90).

40 Psellos, *Chron.* 6.221 (Reinsch 2014, (a 18) 204).

41 καταμερίζουσι γὰρ τὴν περὶ ἡμᾶς ζωήν, Psellos, *Chron.* 6.214 (Reinsch 2014, (a 11) 201).

42 ἀπόρρητοί τινες τελεταὶ … καὶ ὄψεις…. τι τῶν ἀπηγορευμένων…. Psellos, *Chron.* 4.33, 4.37 (Reinsch 2014, 68, 70).

43 Psellos, *Chron.* 7.41 (Reinsch 2014, 227).

44 Psellos, *Chron.* 7.87 (Reinsch 2014, 249).

45 As Kaldellis 1999, 110–113, points out in the context of the "subversive" nature of the *Chronographia*.

Psellos' metaphors are secular. The most notable and elaborate, in Isaak's reign, turn the standard metaphor of the Body Politic into a serial medical diagnosis.[46]

The grateful beneficiary and the historian are self-divided before their author leaves the emperor in the *Chronographia*, but Psellos works the *Encomium* to avoid at least the appearance of either kind of rupture. He draws on all his eloquence and empathy to immerse himself in his mother's spiritual world. He implicates himself fully in its dreams and visions,[47] recording some directly and some indirectly. The dreams are detailed, shapely, powerful. They offer guidance and illumination. They form a bridge to span, but also landmark, the chasm between life and death, faith and philosophy. They span the incipient distance between his mother and himself: several deal with the problematic element in their relationship. In short, such dreams as these connect individuals and experiences whose disconnection they presuppose. As is proper to the genre, Psellos names his relation to the person eulogised, his right and duty to speak, and his fears of falling short, but there is resistance and strain: "I have come far short of your hopes."[48] "For I have met—in my habit—some part of your longing, my philosophy going as far as the worn cloak."[49]

This text too is a double biography, putting something like the following case: Psellos' life of study has been justified, if only because it has equipped him to write her encomium: "It would be an injustice not to give this tribute to my mother, since I received my education from her."[50]

The first two dreams Psellos records are his mother's about him. During his childhood, a family dispute arose: should he be sent away to further his studies, or give them up? His mother supported his ability and need but felt burdened by the disagreement, until she dreamt that someone "resembling the golden-tongued John"[51] appeared to her, saying, "Do not be distressed … I will

46 Psellos, *Chron.* 7.53–58 (Reinsch 2014, 232–235).

47 In the *Encomium*, he includes among his reasons for believing that the soul is immortal, ἀπὸ τῆς ἐν τοῖς ὕπνοις κινήσεως καὶ <τῆς> ἐλλάμψεως, "its movement and illumination in dreams". Psellos, *Enc. in m.* 28 (Criscuolo 1989, 1757–1758).

48 Ἐγὼ μὲν οὖν πολὺ τῶν σῶν ἐλπίδων ἐλάττων γενόμενος. Psellos, *Enc. in m.* 6 (Criscuolo 1989, l.452).

49 τοῦ γὰρ ἐφετοῦ ὅσον ἐν σχήματι τετυχήκαμεν, μέχρι δὲ τοῦ τρίβωνος ἡ φιλοσοφία. Psellos, *Enc. in m.* 26 (Criscuolo 1989, ll.1633–1634).

50 ἅμα δὲ καὶ ἀδικοίην ἂν τὴν μητέρα ἐλλείπων τοῦτον τὸν ἔρανον, ἐξ ἐκείνης μὲν τοὺς λόγους λαβών…. Psellos, *Enc. in m.* 1 (Criscuolo 1989, ll.37–38).

51 πρὸς τὸν χρυσοῦν τὴν γλῶτταν [Ἰωάννην] παρεικασμένος. Psellos, *Enc. in m.* 5 (Criscuolo 1989, ll.311–312).

accompany him as his guide and teacher, and I will fill him with learning."[52] Much later, Psellos was told about a second dream showing her internal disquiet:

> ... διαιρουμένης τοῖς
> περὶ ἐμὲ λογισμοῖς, τοιοῦτος ἐπῆρεν ὄνειρος ἐπὶ μίαν διάνοιαν.
> ἐδόκει γὰρ τὸν σηκὸν εἰσιέναι τῶν Ἀποστόλων, μάλα
> σεμνῶς, δορυφορούντων αὐτὴν ἐνίων οὕσπερ ἠγνόει· ἐπεὶ δὲ
> πρὸς τῷ βήματι γένοιτο—ἐθάρρει γὰρ τὰ κρείττω κἀν ταῖς
> σκιαῖς—, γυναῖκά τινα τῶν δυσθεάτων ἰδεῖν, ἔσωθεν
> ἀπαντήσασαν καὶ παρακελευομένην ἐκτὸς ὑπομεῖναι ὡς
> ἐξιοῦσαν. ἡ δέ, ἐπεὶ ἐνταῦθα γεγόνοι, πρὸς μὲν τὴν μητέρα
> μηδὲν εἰπεῖν, πρὸς δὲ τοὺς ἑκατέρωθεν ἐφεστηκότας στραφεῖσά
> τε καὶ μεταστραφεῖσα, «ἐμπλήσατέ—φησι—τὸν ταύτης
> παῖδα γραμμάτων· ὁρᾶτε γὰρ ὥς με κατασπάζεται».
>
> When she was torn in her thinking about me, a dream such as this settled her mind. She thought she entered the Church of the Apostles, some guardians with her whom she did not know. When she reached the sacred step—for she was brave before the powers that might be in the shadows—she saw, among some who were hard to make out, a certain woman coming from within and telling her, as she approached, to stay outside. But when she was there, she did not speak to my mother at all, but, turning one way and the other, said to those standing at her sides, "Fill this child of hers with learning, for you see that she does honour to me."[53]

These dreams give sanction and authority as well as peace of mind. They establish Psellos' mother as the matriarch, the visionary, and the exemplary pious

52 «μὴ δῆτα κυμαίνου ... ἐγὼ δὲ καὶ ὡς παιδαγωγὸς ἕψομαι τούτῳ καὶ ὡς διδάσκαλος ἐμπλήσω παιδεύσεως.» Psellos, *Enc. in m.* 5 (Criscuolo 1989, ll.312–316).

53 Psellos, *Enc. in m.* 5 (Criscuolo 1989, ll.320–330). Walker (2004, 78) makes the interesting suggestion that the woman is not the Theotokos but the figure of "Lady Rhetoric" or "Lady Philosophy". Certainly, she is described as being among those hard to discern (along with Saints Peter and Paul, the male figures flanking her) but it is hard to see why Philosophy would be accompanied by those saints or entrust Psellos' education to them, while Theodota's own self-education and support of Psellos' hardly amounts to doing honour to Philosophy as such: when she helps her son solve a problem, she asks Heaven to do it.

woman. They invoke heavenly support for his education and promise saintly guidance and control.

A third dream loosely following is the only dream wholly about the dreamer: a flying dream from Psellos' childhood. It is given little context beyond his interest in dream-interpretation, and described as just one of his visions.

> Οὔπω δεκέτης ἦν, ἢ ἴσως ἐπιβεβήκειν τοῦ ἔτους,
> καί με νυκτὸς θήρα τις ἐπῆρε καὶ εἰς ἐλεύθερον ἀέρα μετήνεγκεν. εἰ μὲν οὖν ἐθήρων, οὐκ οἶδα, τεθηρακέναι δὲ ᾤμην ὄρνιθε δύο τῶν μουσικῶν, ὧν ἡ μὲν ψιττακίῳ ἐῴκει, ἡ δὲ ἦν ἀκριβῶς κίττα, καὶ ὑπὸ τὸν κόλπον ἄμφω ἐνεδεδύκει. καί μοι ἐπὶ τούτοις διεχεῖτο καὶ ἐγαννύσκετο ἡ ψυχὴ καὶ πολλάκις ταῖς χερσὶ διωμάλιζον καὶ προσήρμοττον τοῖς πτεροῖς· ἀλλὰ τά γε ὄρνεα, «μὴ τυράννει ἀνθρωπικῶς—ἔφασαν—, μηδὲ βίᾳ λαβών· οἷα δὴ νόμῳ, δεσπότης κυρίευε. ἀλλ' ἐξελὼν λογικῶς τε συγγίνου καὶ διαλέγου. κἂν μὲν πείσῃς, ἐκεῖθεν ἡμῶν ἄρξαι· εἰ δ' οὖν, ἄφες ἡμῖν ἐλεύθερον τὸ πτερόν».
>
> I was not yet ten, or perhaps I had reached that age, and some night-chase lifted me and carried me to the open sky. I did not know if I was hunting, but I thought I had been chasing two musical birds, one like a small parrot and the other just like a jay, and they both went in under a fold of my clothes. I was stretched between them and my spirit rejoiced and, by rapidly using my hands, I kept level and took hold of their wings. But the birds said, "Do not rule tyrannically in the way of humans, nor take by force: rule, master, by law. Keep aloft by reason, and stay and discourse. If you persuade, then rule over us; but if not, give us back the freedom of our wings."[54]

This dream belongs to a pre-Christian, pre-Byzantine tradition linking birds with augury. Where the other dreams attach mysterious experiences to religion, Psellos attributes this to the subconscious. "I thought the vision a projection of the more irrational part of the soul."[55] He is not seen as a family member, but alone; and the dream, later associated with "the verbal arts",[56]

54 Psellos, *Enc. in m.* 6 (Criscuolo 1989, ll.366–376).

55 τοῦ ἀλογωτέρου μέρους τῆς ψυχῆς ἀνάπλασιν ᾤμην τὸ ὅραμα, Psellos, *Enc. in m.* 6 (Criscuolo 1989, ll.387–388).

56 ὕστερον δέ … εἰς τοὺς λόγους τὰς ὄψεις ἐτεκμαιρόμην, Psellos, *Enc. in m.* 6 (Criscuolo 1989, ll.389–390). I am indebted to Walker's fine translation (2005) for this last and some other phrases.

seems to presage a future connection with power. It stands out, marking him as partly alien in his mother's world.

These early dreams show Psellos' role in the family as potentially divisive, a cause of anxiety to all. At the simplest level, to fulfil himself he has to go away, whereas one aspect of his mother's role is to keep her family united. Her dreams—based in her piety—heal her own self-division and end arguments, and her nature is so far like his that, having sought learning herself,[57] she can oversee Psellos' early studies and link them to her metaphysics.

> σὺ δὲ ὡς ἀγωνιῶντι περὶ τὸ πάλαισμα, ἐτεκμαίρου δὲ τῇ ἀναδιπλώσει τοῦ ἔπους, συμπαρίστασο καθα- περεὶ καὶ συνήσπιζες, τὼ χεῖρε πρὸς Θεὸν αἴρουσα καὶ
>
> 'πὺξ' τῇ χειρὶ τὸ στῆθος 'πατάσσουσα'—τοῦτο δὴ τὸ σὸν ἐν ταῖς προσευχαῖς—καὶ ἄνωθέν μοι τὴν τοῦ ἀμφιβόλου ἐπισπωμένη διάγνωσιν.
>
> But you, when I was wrestling with a problem, were conjecturing from the convolution of the verse; you stood beside me and fought like a comrade-in-arms, raising your hands to God and fist-beating your breast with your hand—this was your way in prayer—urging a resolution of the ambiguity from above.[58]

The Psellos of this text is not the "I … by my own means" of the *Chronographia*. Not only does he underline his intellectual debt to his mother and his connections to his family, but he works the narrative through her figure to present his lifetime's undertaking as sanctioned by and joined with hers.

His mother was the family's ruling spirit—even her parents "regarded her as a living law"[59]—and all its members were united in a network, at once strong and delicate, of likeness, consanguinity, reverence, and love. His sister resembled her mother: "they could not be told apart … at all."[60] He was like his father: "I fly along with him like an eaglet … follow like a shadow".[61] But he

57 ὅπου δὲ τὴν μητέρα λάθοι, τὰς τῶν γραμμάτων ἀρχὰς παρά του μόνας λαβοῦσα, εἶτα δὴ ἀφ' ἑαυτῆς συνετίθει καὶ συλλαβὰς ἐποίει καὶ λόγους. "Whenever she could, without her mother's knowing, she obtained her first schooling from the monks, and then formed syllables and composed speeches herself." Psellos, *Enc. in m.* 3 (Criscuolo 1989, ll.138–141).

58 Psellos, *Enc. in m.* 10 (Criscuolo 1989, ll.596–601).

59 καὶ οἱ τεκόντες … 'νόμον' ἐκείνην ἐλογίζοντο 'ἔμψυχον'. Psellos, *Enc. in m.* 8 (Criscuolo 1989, ll.503–505).

60 ἀλλ' ἀπ' ἀλλήλων μὲν κατ' οὐδὲν ἄρα διῄρηντο. Psellos, *Enc. in m.* 13 (Criscuolo 1989, ll.750–751).

61 τῷ δὲ πατρὶ ὥσπερ ἀετιδὴς συμπαρίπταμαι, ἢ μᾶλλον συνέπομαι ὡς σκιά. Psellos, *Enc. in m.* 9 (Criscuolo 1989, ll.561–563). Of his father's grief over his sister's death, he writes, γινώσκω

and his sister "like two shoots springing from the same trunk, we grew together with each other, distinct and indistinguishable".[62] Where Psellos is the odd one out—in being absent, for example, when his sister dies—he is the more embraced.[63] He is enmeshed in a kinship recognising difference within unity.

So, when Psellos and his father give way to their grief, his mother checks her own, bringing strength and stoicism as a counterweight. The same thing happens when his father is dying. At first, Psellos is in control—he "relieved his anxiety and calmed his spirit",[64] then felt his pulse and made the prognosis[65]—but when his father does die, he is inconsolable until his mother intervenes.[66] She balances emotions in herself and thus in him, so that through her governance and support his fourth dream can be conventionally mysterious and pious, not racked with doubts and distress. His dead father appears to him in "the simplicity of joy … and his eyes—their brightness passed all measure".[67]

While her husband lives, his mother figures as a source of unity through balance.

> … ἡ μέν τις πρακτικωτάτη ἐστίν, ἡ δέ τις θατέρῳ προσνένευκε. τῇ δὲ ἐμῇ μητρὶ οὔτε διαίρεσιν ταῦτα ἔσχηκε καὶ ὁμοῦ πάντα συννένευκε καὶ ἐν ταὐτῷ καιρῷ, καὶ ταῦτα ἤδη τῆς ὥρας τὸ ἄνθος ἔχοντι, ἥ τε 'φρόνησις' παρῆν καὶ ἡ 'σύνεσις', ἥ τε πρὸς τὸν λόγον τάξις καὶ ὁ πρὸς τὴν πρᾶξιν λόγος, καὶ τὸ διῃρῆσθαι πρὸς τἀναντία καὶ μὴ διῃρῆσθαι, καὶ ἑκατέρου μὲν ἔχεσθαι, δοκεῖν δὲ θατέρου.

τὸν χαρακτῆρα ἐν τοῖς ἐμοῖς εἴδεσι τῆς ψυχῆς, "I recognise his character in the configurations of my soul." *Enc. in m.* 16 (Criscuolo 1989, ll.958–959).

62 ὥσπερ ἐκ ταὐτοῦ πρέμνου δύω ἀνιόντε κλάδω, συνεπεφύκειμεν ἀλλήλοις, διαιρούμενοί τε ἅμα καὶ μὴ διαιρούμενοι, Psellos, *Enc. in m.* 13 (Criscuolo 1989, ll.729–731).

63 Psellos, *Enc. in m.* 15 (Criscuolo 1989, ll.851–867).

64 τὸν τάραχον αὐτοῦ ἀφελών, κατέστησα τὴν ψυχήν, Psellos, *Enc. in m.* 18 (Criscuolo 1989, ll.1122–1123).

65 ὡς δὲ καὶ τοῖς δακτύλοις τὰς τῆς ἀρτηρίας κινήσεις ἐτεκμηράμην—ἐσπουδάζετο γάρ μοι μακρόθεν ἡ περὶ τοῦτο τέχνη—ἀπειρήκειν εὐθύς. ἐκλέλοιπε γὰρ τῷ μορίῳ ἡ κίνησις…. Psellos, *Enc. in m.* 19 (Criscuolo 1989, ll.1151–1154).

66 'Ἦν ἐν αὐτῇ μίξις καὶ στάσις πλειόνων ἐναντιώσεων. ἐνίκησε δ' οὖν ὅμως αὐτῇ τὸ φιλόσοφον. "There was a mingling and a surge of conflicts within her. But then … philosophy prevailed." Psellos, *Enc. in m.* 19 (Criscuolo 1989, ll.1213–1215).

67 Ἐγεγήθει γοῦν ἀτεχνῶς καὶ σκιρτήματι καθαρῷ ἀνέφερε τὴν ψυχήν, τά τε ὄμματα, πυρσοί τινες ἐκεῖθεν ἐστέλλοντο καὶ ἡ χαροπότης τὸ μέτρον παρήλλακτο, Psellos, *Enc. in m.* 20 (Criscuolo 1989, ll.1264–1266).

> One person leans most toward the active life, and another to the other. But for my mother these things were undivided and everything came together in due measure, in the bloom of the high season. Good judgment was there, and intelligence, the disposition towards reason, reason towards action, and to dividing and not dividing opposites: to hold to one while being seen to embrace the other.[68]

She does experience some internal division, however, which intensifies with time until it sets soul against body, changing the terms of her existence: her strongest desire is for severe monasticism, for *askesis*. Since her husband is against it,[69] she solves the problem cleverly, giving him precedence by inviting him to take the path before her,[70] with the happy result revealed in the fourth dream. His death gives her the opportunity to follow him: "her whole being flew towards that life".[71] "She renounced not only pleasures but … necessities".[72] "Her body became so light as … to rise above the ground".[73]

Psellos had taken issue elsewhere with this narrow, body-hating version of faith but in the *Encomium* he is careful to ascribe objections to it to others: "Many different people found fault with the inappropriateness of her self-denial",[74] especially her father.[75] She tries to obey him but breaks down in sorrow and confusion[76] in a small drama over a fish-dinner. From that point Psellos immerses himself in the language and metaphors of her longing. She has been living in the monastery, growing weaker and more emaciated, but still hesitating over her worthiness to take the habit, when she is told about "a divine seeing" (θειοτέρα ὄψις).

---

68 Psellos, *Enc. in m.* 4 (Criscuolo 1989, ll.200–207). See Kaldellis 2006, 42–45, on the *Encomium*'s strategy of "unifying apparent opposites", "antithesis always leading to synthesis".

69 Psellos, *Enc. in m.* 11 (Criscuolo 1989, ll.638–40). δὲ οὐκ ἦν πρὸς τὴν φύσιν παντελῶς ἀπομάχεσθαι, "and she herself was not wholly at war with nature" 17, l.1045.

70 Psellos, *Enc. in m.* 16 (Criscuolo 1989, ll.1003–1004).

71 ὅλη πρὸς ἐκείνην ἐπτέρωτο τὴν ζωήν, Psellos, *Enc. in m.* 21 (Criscuolo 1989, l.1298).

72 ἀποχὴν οὐ τῶν ἡδέων μόνον, ἀλλ' ἤδη καὶ τῶν ἀναγκαίων, Psellos, *Enc. in m.* 21 (Criscuolo 1989, l.1308).

73 τοιοῦτον αὐτῇ γέγονε τὸ σῶμα κοῦφον, ὥς ἀληθῶς καὶ μετέωρον, Psellos, *Enc. in m.* 21 (Criscuolo 1989, ll.1340–1341).

74 Πολλοὶ μὲν οὖν καὶ ἄλλοι τὴν ἀκαιρίαν αὐτῇ τῆς ἐγκρατείας ἐμέμφοντο, Psellos, *Enc. in m.* 22 (Criscuolo 1989, ll.1343–1344).

75 Psellos, *Enc. in m.* 22 (Criscuolo 1989, ll.1348–1350).

76 οὐκ οἶδα τουτὶ τὸ δρᾶμα, οὐδ' ἐπίσταμαι τὴν σκηνήν, "I do not know the play and I do not understand the stage." Psellos, *Enc. in m.* 22 (Criscuolo 1989, ll.1368–1369).

> πρεσβύτις γάρ τις ἐκ σπαργάνων αὐτῶν τῷ ἀκηράτῳ βίῳ καταγηράσασα, ἐν ὕπνοις ἁρπάζεται τὴν ψυχήν, ἡ δὲ ἁρπαγὴ οὐκ εἰς ἀέρα ἐκούφισεν, ἀλλ' εἰς θεάτρου σχῆμα μετήνεγκεν, εἰς τὸ στάδιον μὲν οὐ καταγαγοῦσα, ἄνω δέ τι μετεωρίσασα ἔνθα ἔδει τὸν βασιλέα τὸ βῆμα ποιήσασθαι. περιβλεψαμένη γὰρ χρυσοῦν μὲν ἕνα τεθέαται θρόνον, πολὺ τὸ ἄρρητον ἔχοντα· ἡ γὰρ ἀστραπὴ τῆς ὕλης οὔτε τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς ὁρᾷν ξυνεχώρει, οὔτε ταύτῃ ἐδίδου εἰπεῖν τι περὶ ἐκείνου. ἑκατέρωθεν δὲ πολλοὺς παρεσκευασμένους θρόνους, τοὺς μὲν καὶ χρυσοῦς, τοὺς πλείους δὲ ἐξ ἐλέφαντος, ἐν μέσῳ δὲ τούτων ἐκ δεξιᾶς ἕνα παρὰ τοὺς ἄλλους. τὴν μὲν γὰρ ὕλην οὐκ εἶχεν εἰδέναι ἥτις αὐτῷ ὑποβέβλητο, πλὴν ὅσον μέλανι μὲν ἐβέβαπτο χρώματι· ἐδίδου δέ τι λαμπρότητος ἡ βαφή, καὶ οὐδὲ αὕτη ἀκτίνων τινῶν ἀπεστέρητο. περὶ ἧς δὴ καὶ ἔρεσθαι τὴν πρεσβύτιν καὶ εἰπεῖν τὸν ἀπαγαγόντα ὅτι Θεοδότης ὁ θρόνος—τοῦτο γὰρ ἐκαλεῖτο ἡ μήτηρ—, 'ὀνομαστὶ' δὲ καὶ τἆλλα εἰρήκει· «ἐκείνῃ γὰρ ὁ βασιλεύς φησι τοῦτον παρασκευάσασθαι μελλούσῃ οὐ μετὰ πολὺ ἐνταῦθα ἀφίξεσθαι.»
>
> An elder who from infancy had grown old in the chaste life was carried off in spirit in her sleep. The captive was not lifted into the sky, but conveyed to something looking like a theatre; and not brought down into the stadium, but raised above the place where the emperor's footstool should be. Looking round, she saw a single golden throne, far beyond words; for neither was the lightning-flash of the material bearable for the eyes to see, nor was it given to speak about it in any way. On both sides many thrones had been prepared, some golden, most of ivory; and one on the right beyond the rest. She was not able to identify its material, except that it was dyed a dark colour; but the dye gave off some brilliance, and it was not without splendour. The elder asked about it and the guide said the throne was Theodota's by name—for my mother was called this—and went on to declare: "The Emperor says this throne has been prepared for her; she will be coming here before long."[77]

The dream is her invitation, and Psellos uses the blended language of Pauline metaphor and visionary embellishment to describe his mother's victory over

77 Psellos, *Enc. in m.* 22 (Criscuolo 1989, ll.1399–1417).

the flesh.[78] He even tries to bring her self-starvation within the ambit of the character he has ascribed to her throughout her life: "Unlike things were brought close together by her, and their opposition reconciled by her alone, or she saw the opposites—how shall I put it?—as alike, being of one nature."[79] This is the unifying—mystical—idea of the *Encomium*, but the strain is felt. The final dream maps it.

Absent when his mother died ("no angel sent winged word to me"),[80] he begs her to appear to him,[81] and she does so, in a strange, ambivalent dream-vision. Some hierophants come to take him to the 'holy fathers',[82] and they lead him along a narrowing path which ends in a stone. He struggles head first through the opening, and down a staircase—so far, so orthodo, yet in its downward movement not unlike other underworld traditions.[83] Reaching a chapel, he finds his mother standing to one side by an icon of the Theotokos, and "the other side I did not at first quite see".[84] When he rushes to embrace her, she wards him off, telling him to look the other way:

> … μοναχός τις ὤπτο οὐκ
> ὄρθιος, ἀλλ' ὑποκλάσας τοῖς γόνασι· δέλτος αὐτῷ ἐν χεροῖν,
> πρὸς ἣν δὴ καὶ ἐπεπήγει τοῖς ὄμμασιν. ἐᾠκει δὲ
> ὑπερμεγέθει τινί, στρυφνὸς τὴν ὄψιν καὶ σκυθρωπὸς τὴν
> ὀφρῦν καὶ τὴν 'ἀσκητικὴν' ἀκριβῶς ἀποπνέων 'ζωήν'. «καὶ

78 She prepares herself for the rite of entry: ἔδνα προσάγουσα τῷ νυμφίῳ οἷα οὐκ ἄλλη· 'κόμην πιναράν', 'τύλους γονάτων', ὀστᾶ κατεσκληκότα καὶ τὴν τοῦ δέρους τραχύτητα. ὁ δὲ ἀντεδίδου φιλοτιμότερον· δακτύλιον ἐπὶ τῆς χειρὸς ἀστράπτον 'σφενδόνῃ χρυσῇ', 'ὑποδήματα περὶ τοὺς πόδας', ἵνα δὴ ἐπιβαίνοιεν 'ἐπάνω σκορπίων καὶ ὄφεων', 'τὸ τοῦ σταυροῦ τρόπαιον', 'τὴν περικεφαλαίαν τοῦ σωτηρίου', τὴν ὀξείαν 'τοῦ πνεύματος μάχαιραν'; "bringing the Bridegroom wedding gifts like no other: dirty hair, callused knees, withered bones and rough skin. But he gave something even more precious in return: a shining ring hooped with gold for her hand, sandals for the feet, so that she might trample down scorpions and snakes, the victory-trophy of the cross, the helmet of salvation, the sharp sword of the spirit." Psellos, *Enc. in m.* 23 (Criscuolo 1989, ll.1438–1445).

79 Psellos, *Enc. in m.* 25 (Criscuolo 1989, ll.1584–1587): τὰ ἀνόμοια παραπλήσια ταύτῃ κατέστη καὶ ἡ ἐναντίωσις τῇδε μόνῃ ἐσπείσατο, ἢ τὰ ἐναντία ἐπὶ μιᾶς φύσεως ὤφθη—πῶς ἂν εἴποιμι;—ὁμοιότροπα.

80 οὔθ' ὁ ἀγγέλλων ἐμοὶ τὸν λόγον ἐπτέρωτο, Psellos, *Enc. in m.* 23 (Criscuolo 1989, ll.1483–1484).

81 δίδου μοι δὲ καὶ τὴν σὴν ὄψιν ἐν τοῖς ὀνείρασι μετὰ τῶν συμβόλων τῆς σχέσεως…. "Let me see you in dreams with the emblems of your condition …" Psellos, *Enc. in m.* 24 (Criscuolo 1989, ll.1551–1552).

82 τοὺς ἁγίους … ἀββάδας, Psellos, *Enc. in m.* 26 (Criscuolo 1989, l.1641).

83 Walker (2004, 92n.) names some "pagan oracular shrines", and there is also a trace of underworld visitations in the Greek and Roman traditions.

84 τὸ δ' ἄλλο οὐπάνυ εὐθὺς τεθέαμαι, Psellos, *Enc. in m.* 26 (Criscuolo 1989, ll.1664–1665).

> τίς δὲ οὗτος;»· τὴν μητέρα ἠρώτησα. ἡ δὲ ἀμεταστρόφως
> αὖθις· «ὁ μέγας—ἔφη—, τέκνον, Βασίλειος. ἀλλ' ἄπιθι
> προσκυνήσων αὐτῷ». ἐπεὶ δὲ προσελήλυθα καὶ προσβλέψας,
> οὗτος ἀνένευσεν. ὁ μὲν ἀθρόον συμπτύξας τὴν δέλτον καὶ
> βροντῆς ἦχον πεποιηκὼς 'ἀφανὴς ἐγεγόνει'. καὶ οὐδὲ τὴν
> μητέρα ἔτι τεθέαμαι, ἀλλ' ἑτέρωσέ πη διαιτώμενος ἦν …
>
> A monk was visible, not upright but bent at the knees, a writing-tablet in his hands on which he had his eyes fixed. He seemed like someone very great, with a stern face and a forbidding brow, and with a definite air of the ascetic life. "Who is this?" I asked my mother and, still not turning, she said, "Basil the Great, child. Go, do reverence to him." But when I approached and looked towards him, he looked up, at once folded the tablet and, with a noise like thunder, disappeared. And I no longer saw my mother, but was somewhere else….[85]

Psellos claims this dream as his mother's imprimatur on his vocation: "this too was your work, even after death".[86] Yet her behaviour is not like his father's, in the corresponding dream. "He approached me in quite a human way and did not shrink from my touch, but let himself be held. And he held me as well."[87] His mother will not even turn towards him. As for Basil, more like an ascetic than the great rhetorician, on seeing Psellos, he shuts the tablet and goes. The dream is capable of opposite interpretations.[88]

His mother had wanted, as if "at an equally divided road, to run both ways … and reach the same end",[89] but she took the uncompromisingly ascetic way. The encomium ends with an extraordinary peroration in which Psellos declares his great and equally intractable difference from his mother's "way of straightness" and "the philosophy you follow".[90]

---

85 Psellos, *Enc. in m.* 26 (Criscuolo 1989, ll.1671–1681).

86 καὶ τοῦτο δὲ σὸν ἔργον καὶ μετὰ θάνατον. Psellos, *Enc. in m.* 26 (Criscuolo 1989, ll.1634–1635).

87 προσήει γοῦν μοι ἀνθρωπικώτερον καὶ τὴν ἐπαφὴν οὐχ ὑπέφευγεν, ἀλλ' ἐδίδου ἐφάπτεσθαι. ὁ δὲ καὶ αὐτὸς ἀνθήπτετο καί με…. Psellos, *Enc. in m.* 20 (Criscuolo 1989, ll.1268–1270).

88 Walker (2004, 93) resolves the ambiguity by suggesting that Theodota now represents the Neoplatonic "fountain of life" who directs Psellos to Basil the Great in order that he may be rejected by Basil and asceticism and returned to his proper vocation in the world. Again, it is an interesting if inventive thought, but Theodota does not act like any kind of fountain: she is gazing at the icon of the Theometor and waving her son aside.

89 ἐβούλετο δέ, ὥσπερ ὁδοῦ διττὰ καὶ ἴσα τμήματα, τὴν ὁμοίαν ἀμφοτέρους δραμεῖν καὶ πρὸς τὸ αὐτὸ καταλῆξαι πέρας, Psellos, *Enc. in m.* 11 (Criscuolo 1989, ll.643–645).

90 Psellos, *Enc. in m.* 27 (Criscuolo 1989, ll.1687–1689).

> Θέλγει γάρ με καὶ ἡ τέχνη τῶν λόγων … οὐκ ἐᾷ με ἡσυχαζειν ἡ τῆς σφαίρας περιφορά … κινεῖ με καὶ στάσιμος ἐπιστήμη … ποδαπός τε ὁ φυσικός … πῶς δι᾽ ὅλων διατείνει τῶν θείων γενῶν. Ἡ δέ γε μουσικὴ … Οὐ τὰ γένη δὲ μόνον ζητῶ τῶν ἐπιστημῶν … τὴν δέ γε ὑπερκειμένην σοφίαν … καὶ τιμῶ καὶ σεβάζομαι … Ἄγαμαι δὲ καὶ τὴν διὰ τῶν συλλογισμῶν ἀπόδειξιν … ὅτι πᾶσιν ἐντυχὼν βιβλίοις Ἑλληνικοῖς, εἰπεῖν δὲ καὶ βαρβαρικοῖς, ὁπόσα Ὀρφεὺς ἢ Ζωροάστρης ἢ Ἀμμοῦς συνέγραψεν ὁ Αἰγύπτιος … ὅς γε οὐδὲ τοῖς κρείττοσιν αὐτῶν προσέχω τὸν νοῦν, ἀλλά μοι τὸ φιλότιμον τῆς ψυχῆς μέχρι τῆς τῶν δογμάτων αὐτῶν κεκίνηται γνώσεως….
>
> For the art of discourse enthrals me … The revolution of the spheres does not let me rest … the science of things stationary moves me too … and where does natural reason come from … how does it extend to all the divine becoming … Music, too … I do not merely investigate the types of knowledge … but the wisdom lying above … I honour and revere … I admire the demonstration of syllogisms too … I have read in all Hellenic books and, in a manner of speaking, the barbarian ones, all that Orpheus or Zoroaster or Ammon the Egyptian wrote … I do not attach myself even to the better doctrines but my soul's ambition is stirred so far as seeking to know what they are….[91]

It is even more comprehensive than the parallel section of the *Chronographia*. This mighty apologia is punctuated at points by his mother's terms of reference and ends in a reverse plea: "re-direct … me to the ascent to God".[92] Contradictions notwithstanding, he might be seen as theorising the reach of natural reason through the "divine becoming", for he twice allows the honorific "philosophy" to her as well as to himself.[93] If he and his sister were "like two shoots springing from the same trunk … distinct and indistinguishable", their parents were the trunk on which they grew. Still rhetoricising his mother's choice and his own as "dividing and not dividing opposites", is he flying on a wing and a prayer? Is the chapel, the road's fork, a parting or conjunction?[94]

---

91 Psellos, *Enc. in m.* 27–31 (Criscuolo 1989, quotations, ll.1692–1697; 29, ll.1809–1810).

92 Psellos, *Enc. in m.* 31 (Criscuolo 1989, ll.1932–1933).

93 At the turning point of his mother's descent into *askesis*, he has her say that the necessities of the body were incompatible with her "philosophy" (ἀναμέμικταί μοι φιλοσοφούσῃ) Psellos, *Enc. in m.* 22 (Criscuolo 1989, ll.1365–1367).

94 Papaioannou and Walker give uncompromising answers. Papaioannou (2013, 164) finds in the *Encomium* "an author who parades the rules of dominant culture in order to break away from them". Walker (2004, 98) reads Psellos as "defining the Symeonesque asceticism that destroyed his mother as 'apostasy'". I find the work's energy and eloquence more widely distributed across its conflicting elements than they do, and suggest that Walker's final identification of Theodora with the *pêgê* disrupts the work's economy quite wildly.

Can the two roads meet in a Christianity that comprehends not only rhetoric, philosophy and a value for the body, but also their own mutually untouching verges? The *Encomium* seems to me to raise the question rather than resolving it, and to remain ambiguous in the true sense, working—running?—in both ways. A resolution is beyond its scope of enquiry.

In different genres, Psellos constructs alternative versions of his times and of himself. Neither captures the whole Psellos,[95] yet they have more in common than one might expect, as his uneasy attachment to his family prefigures his uneasy detachment from the court. The sparse and spurious nature of dreams in one text, and their power and importance in the other, indicate the difference: dreams are a petty distraction in the negotiations between a philosopher and a ruler, while they may perhaps be a meeting ground between philosophy and religion, even of the more austere kind. When the living seek connection with the dead, dreams and visions are almost inevitably sought. In this case they govern much of Psellos' spiritual relation with his mother even while she is alive; they testify to the nature and strength of that relation, as well as to the growing distance between them. In the extremity of their final separation, the dream vision becomes most powerful as well as most ambiguous.

Together, the two texts offer a Psellosian compendium of insights: dreams, visions and prophecies can serve self-interest, delude or flatter; they can be simulated for gain. They are powerful and persuasive tools. They can be appropriated to belief-systems, project the hidden mind, bring comfort and relief. They can enable decisions and illuminate a path, or they can be ambiguous, like the oracles of old. They chart connections and disconnections in terms of one another.

The dreams in the *Encomium* place themselves in a distinctively Byzantine tradition, but dreams and visions are invisible companions to us still. The American poet Tracy K. Smith records that, as her mother was dying, "she began speaking to someone in a low voice". Tracy asked, "Who is there with you?" and her mother answered, "There are two angels sitting here … and one of them has just told me you're going to become a writer."[96]

95 Let alone the 'real' one. See Jeffreys' admirable account of the fictional element in the *Chronographia* (Jeffreys 2010) and that of Psellos' "decidedly rhetorical self … a self that appears invented like a literary character" in Papaioannou 2013, 162, 165.

96 Smith 2016, 318.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

Criscuolo, U. (ed.) (1989) *Michele Psello. Autobiografia: encomio per la madre* (Naples). Repr. in TLG available online at www.tlg.uci.edu (subscription only), Michael Psellus. (*Biogr. Encom.* 11).

Kaldellis, A. (trans.) (2006) *The Byzantine Family of Michael Psellos: Mothers and Sons, Fathers and Daughters*, with contributions from D. Jenkins and S. Papaioannou (Notre Dame, IN).

Kaldellis, A. and Krallis, D. (trans.) (2012) *Michael Attaleiates: The History*, CSHB 16 (Bonn).

Kaldellis, A. and Polemis, I. (trans.) (2015) *Psellos and the patriarchs: letters and funeral orations for Keroullarios, Leichoudes, and Xiphilinos* (Notre Dame, IN).

Reinsch, D. (ed.) (2014) *Michaelis Psellis Chronographia*, Millennium-Studien, 2 vols (Berlin and Boston).

Thurn, I. (ed.) (1973) *Ioannis Scylitzae Synopsis Historiarum*, CFHB 5 (Berlin). Trans. J. Wortley (2010) *John Skylitzes: A Synopsis of Byzantine History 811–1057* (Cambridge).

Tsolakis, E. T. (ed.) (2011) *Michaelis Attaleiatae Historia*, CFHB 50 (Athens).

Walker, J. (trans.) (2005) 'Michael Psellos: the *Encomium of His Mother*', *Advances in the History of Rhetoric* 8, 239–313.

Secondary Sources

Jeffreys, M. (2010) 'Psellos and "His Emperors": Fact, Fiction and Genre', in R. Macrides (ed.) *History as Literature in Byzantium: Papers from the Fortieth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, University of Birmingham, April 2007* (Farnham and Burlington), 73–91.

Kaldellis, A. (1999) *The Argument of Psellos' Chronographia* (Leiden, Boston and Cologne).

Papaioannou, S. (2013) *Michael Psellos: Rhetoric and Authorship in Byzantium* (Cambridge).

Smith, T. K. (2016) *Ordinary Light: A Memoir* (New York).

Stone, A. (2011) 'Imperial Types in *Byzantine Panegyric*', in G. Nathan & L. Garland (eds) *Basileia: Essays on Imperium and Culture*, Byzantina Australiensia 17 (Brisbane), 173–188.

Walker, J. (2004) 'These Things I Have Not Betrayed: Michael Psellos' *Encomium of His Mother* as a Defense of Rhetoric', *Rhetorica* 22/1, 49–101.

PART 4

Remembering the Saints in Hymns and Hagiography

∴

CHAPTER 12

Loyalty and Betrayal: Villains, Imagination and Memory in the Reception of the Johannite Schism

Wendy Mayer

Building on research from a variety of disciplines within the social sciences as well as studies in religion, this chapter explores what causes groups to radicalise and the agency of language in that process.[1] Of particular interest for our purposes here is previous work on the agency of language, particularly cultural and metaphoric concepts, in modern to contemporary social conflicts.[2] Within these various bodies of research, analysis of the narratives that emerge from moments of conflict in the history of the Byzantine world is a key component but one that has been neglected. One implication of that research is to move on to how the memory of such conflicts is constructed and passed down and how that memory is subsequently used to underwrite the narratives of later conflicts.[3] The Johannite schism, which played out in the early 5th century in the Byzantine capital, Constantinople, and which divided the early Byzantine empire for several decades is one such moment.[4] It plays into constructions of heresy and orthodoxy that continued to divide the Byzantine world. Further, it is my suspicion that it is no accident—a phenomenon that this chapter begins

1 See Mayer forthcoming a–c, 2018, 2017a, 2017b, based on Lakoff 2009; Graham and Haidt 2012; Haidt 2012. For a summary of approaches on the topic of religious radicalisation up to 2012, see Mayer 2013a.

2 See especially the work of Andreas Musolff on racial prejudice: e.g. Musolff 2007, 2012, 2017. The latter study has implications for the rise in current political discourse of "fake news".

3 The present article stems from a new project, *Memories of Utopia: Destroying the Past to Create the Future* (*300–650 CE*), funded by the Australian Research Council (DP 170104595, 2017–2019), co-investigated with Bronwen Neil, Pauline Allen and Chris L. de Wet. The research on which the article is based was also conducted in my capacity as a Research Fellow in the Department of Biblical and Ancient Studies, University of South Africa.

4 While the schism officially lasted from 404–438 CE and was centred at Constantinople, it sent ripples throughout the eastern Mediterranean world and into Italy and some other western regions as a result of episcopal and political networks and alliances and the large number of Johannite supporters who were arrested and exiled. The emperors Arcadius and Honorius were both involved. At the episcopal level, it fed into widespread concerns about theological heterodoxy and Origenism. For the involvement in the schism of Egyptian and Roman interests, see Van Nuffelen 2013a, 2013b. For a more general account of the schism, see Kelly 1995, 286–290.

© KONINKLIJKE BRILL NV, LEIDEN, 2018 | DOI:10.1163/9789004375710_014

to explore—that the most influential narrative cycle concerning the schism renews and embellishes the story precisely at the time of the iconoclast controversies that arose in the 8th and 9th centuries. This is about more than just hagiography. It is about what the narrative of heroes and villains that sits behind certain kinds of hagiography does and what it feeds when it circulates within equally schismatic communities.

In teasing out the mechanisms at play in such conflicts and the role of language as both a barometer and cause of conflict, I have been drawn to the cognitive and neuro-sciences for explanatory models and, most particularly, to the fields of experimental moral psychology and cognitive linguistics. This is a complex and not uncontested body of research. In this chapter I set out in brief the methodological presuppositions on which my analysis is based, bearing in mind that full discussion of those fields, the current debates within them, and the constraints and implications of their research would require a substantially longer article. Secondly, I discuss in brief one particular aspect of that research, narrative framing, and one subset of particular relevance to morality, ideological narratives. After explaining why ideological narratives are of particular relevance to the question of imagination and memory for social groups, I then explore what role ideological narratives and their construction of heroes and villains play in the narratives to which the Johannite schism gave rise and their subsequent reframing. In my conclusion I raise questions about the role this construction of memory is likely to have played in the eighth–to tenth-century context.

1 Methodological Presuppositions

First, let us set out the methodological presuppositions.[5] In conflicts that present as religious it is not the religion itself (in the sense of its reasoned doctrines or beliefs) that is at play, but rather the morality that underlies it. By morality, I do not mean the values that the religion aspires to (its ethics or moral code), but rather social-functional morality—the subconscious values and moral judgments that inform our everyday actions and behaviour. Our approach is thus sociological. This applies to our understanding of morality, the sacred,

5 The presuppositions set out in this paragraph and the supporting literature are discussed in Mayer 2017a and forthcoming b. Rather than supplying extensive footnoting here, I refer the reader to those publications. For a general understanding of these positions and the research from within experimental moral psychology that supports them, see Haidt 2012 and Greene 2013.

and religion and to the role each plays in binding social groups together. That is, to put it broadly, we are approaching the topic from the perspective of Emile Durkheim.[6] Our presuppositions are that a religious movement, denomination or sect is a social group. Religious groups are not special. Individuals bind together to form religious groups, and religious groups split into sects or come into conflict with other religious groups, on the basis of the same mechanisms that cause all social groups to bind, split or generate conflict. A religion can be strongly moral, but morality can exist without religion. Morality in this social-functional sense equally underlies and shapes politics, economics, and religion.

We are also talking about cognition and the brain. We accept the dual-processing model of cognition that divides "our cognitive activities … into two basic types: effortful, deliberative and conscious ('reason'); and automatic, intuitive and non-conscious ('intuition')".[7] The precise relationship between reason and intuition in cognition is much debated, with the exception of moral cognition. In this one specific domain there is consensus that all judgments, without exception, are automatic and intuitive. Reason is secondary in this process. Jonathan Haidt calls this "the emotional dog and its rational tail".[8] That is, we automatically and without exception make moral decisions or judgments at the pre-conscious level and rationalise them after the fact.

When we accept that morality is fundamental to what allows non-kin groups to work together and overcome selfishness, this finding has profound implications for what sets one group against another or causes a group's internal cohesion to fragment. As the moral psychologists argue, morality both binds and blinds. That is, as Joshua Greene expresses it: groups share some core values; each group's philosophy is woven into its daily life; each group has its own version of moral common sense; they fight, not because they are immoral, but because when they come into competition, they view the contested ground from very different moral perspectives.[9] As Jonathan Haidt expresses it: "[Morality] binds us into ideological teams that fight each other as though the fate of the world depended on our side winning each battle. It blinds us to the fact that each team is composed of good people who have something important to say."[10] In evolutionary terms, Haidt and his team have identified five moral foundations that facilitate group cohesion: care/harm; fairness/cheating; loyalty/betrayal; authority/subversion; and sanctity/degradation. Each is

6 See, in addition to Durkheim 1915, Bellah 1973 and Haidt and Graham 2009.
7 Clarke 2014, 75.
8 Haidt 2012, 32–60.
9 Greene 2013, 4–5 (paraphrased).
10 Haidt 2012, 366.

associated with its own specific emotions and triggers.[11] We will return to the loyalty/betrayal one in a moment.

The agency of language in triggering these moral foundations or intuitions and the emotions associated with them is another key component.[12] When we turn to the field of cognitive linguistics, we learn that the brain makes sense of abstract concepts by mapping them onto concrete ones from everyday experience. Metaphor is not a rhetorical ornament but a fundamental way we think and make sense of the world around us. Morality, religion, politics and economics are all abstract domains that we instinctively, and thus commonly, use metaphors to make sense of. Narrative frames are shortcuts we use to reason with and make swift decisions. These draw both on the moral foundations and on moral metaphors that we think and reason with. What is particularly intriguing and suggestive in applying this work to historical texts is that both the foundations and a number of moral metaphors are so basic to embodied human experience, and thus the way that we intuitively think, that they are common across large numbers of language groups and cultures.[13]

2 Construction of Ideological Narratives

This brings us to ideological narratives and the specific topic of this article. At the same time that Jonathan Haidt was publishing *The Righteous Mind: Why Good People are Divided by Politics and Religion*, he and Jesse Graham published 'Sacred Values and Evil Adversaries'.[14] They were interested in the question of how a group constructs evil and, in fighting that evil, justifies the committing of violence. They argued that a key element is the construction of ideological narratives.[15]

> These ideological narratives are clearly like life stories in most ways. For example, they always incorporate a reconstructed past and an imagined

11 The foundations and their emotions and triggers are presented in tabular form in Haidt 2012, 146, fig. 6.2, and discussed at 150–179.

12 Again, this is discussed in Mayer 2017a, 2017b, and outlined in greater detail and extensively footnoted in section 3 of Mayer forthcoming a. Some foundational works on the topic are Fauconnier and Turner 2002; Lakoff 2009; Kövecses 2010; Ingram 2013.

13 On the primary nature of moral concepts and the metaphors used to describe them, see Lakoff 2009, 93–98. On the progression in moral psychology research from narrow models to an evolutionary model that takes into account moral intuition across cultures, see Haidt 2012, 134–146.

14 Graham and Haidt 2012.

15 Graham and Haidt 2012, 16.

> future, often telling a story of progress or of decline. But they are different from life stories in one key respect: Each person must be the first author of his or her own life story. More than a little bit of plagiarism would be shameful. But when people join together to pursue political projects—from the demand for civil rights to violent revolution to genocide—they must share a common story, one that they accept as true without having authored it. Ideological narratives, then, by their very nature, are always stories about good and evil. They identify heroes and villains, they explain how the villains got the upper hand, and they lay out or justify the means by which—if we can just come together and fight hard enough—we can vanquish the villains and return the world to its balanced or proper state.

While in the construction of these narratives all five moral foundations could be invoked, a particular role was played by the loyalty/betrayal and the sanctity/degradation foundations, as Graham and Haidt observed:[16]

> *Sacredness* refers to the human tendency to invest people, places, times, and ideas with importance far beyond the utility they possess. Trade-offs or compromises involving what is sacralized are resisted or refused. In prototypical cases, these investments tie individuals to larger groups with shared identities and ennobling projects, and so trade-offs or compromises are felt to be acts of betrayal….

"Evil is whatever stands in the way of sacredness…. Evil emerges as communities construct ideological narratives and converge on a shared understanding of what their problems are, who caused them, and how to fight back."[17] If we view the narratives that arise at the time of the Johannite schism and the later framing of it in this light, heroes and villains, the construction of evil, and loyalty and betrayal are, in certain versions, given considerable prominence.

3 Original Context

Written in late 407 for pro-Johannites in response to John's recent death,[18] the funeral oration by ps-Martyrius presents a classic example of an ideological narrative. In league with the empress Eudoxia and the Egyptian bishop,

16 Graham and Haidt 2012, 14.

17 Graham and Haidt 2012, 18.

18 For its redating to ca. November 407 CE, see Wallraff 2007, 14.

Theophilus, who are both said to be consummately evil, the chief villain and opponent is the literal embodiment of evil, the Devil.[19] Loyalty and betrayal come up as a constant theme. This is particularly the case in the way that John's confrontation with Gainas is cast, in which ps-Martyrius defends John against the popular accusation that, in talking with the Arian Gainas, he was a traitor to the church, casting Gainas instead as the real villain and betrayer of Nicene Christianity.[20] In the account of the events at the Synod of the Oak in September 403, John's own clergy are cast as his betrayers (they brought charges against him in support of Theophilus),[21] and the events are said to be so irrational, counterintuitive, and unfair that they "imitated the imaginary world of dreams".[22] Throughout the account as a whole, the literal whipping up of outrage and anger at acts of betrayal and cheating abound, while considerable attention is given to evoking, through lurid description, satisfaction and even glee at the comeuppance of an arch-villain, Eudoxia.[23] This is the most extreme example of such a narrative from this initial period, although we should note that the demonisation of both Theophilus and Eudoxia as arch-enemies of the Johannite cause and of its hero, John, rapidly became a staple within the early ps-Chrysostomic letters and homilies.[24]

19 Ps-Martyrius, *Or. funeb.* 27–45 (Wallraff 2007, 76–98).

20 Ps-Martyrius, *Or. funeb.* 47–51 (Wallraff 2007, 98–104). See *Or. funeb.* 51.1–5 for the accusation by his enemies that John was a traitor (προδότης) to Nicene Christianity; *Or. funeb.* 50 for John's loyal defence of Nicene Christianity against the traitor Gainas. Gainas is also cast as disloyal to his own race, being characterised as a deserter (αὐτόμολος) three times in just six lines (*Or. funeb.* 47.1–6). Ps-Martyrius makes it clear from the moment Gainas is introduced that he is a betrayer by nature.

21 Ps-Martyrius, *Or. funeb.* 52–54 (Wallraff 2007, 104–106), esp. 53, where ps-Martyrius characterises Theophilus, bishop of Alexandria, in addition as a cheat (he subverts due legal process), a theme continued in section 54. The characteristic emotion evoked through activation of the fairness/cheating intuition is anger (Haidt 2012, 146), which would have further inflamed the sense of outrage among those loyal to John evoked by the constant portrayal of his enemies as traitors.

22 Ps-Martyrius, *Or. funeb.* 52.4–5 (Wallraff 2007, 104; trans. Barnes and Bevan 2013, 70): καὶ γίνεται πρᾶγμα ὀνείρων … φαντασίαν μιμούμενον.

23 Ps-Martyrius, *Or. funeb.* 121 (Wallraff 2007, 174–176). See also the account of Eudoxia's miscarriage at the time of John's first exile, which evokes God's righteous anger and retribution (*Or. funeb.* 66 [Wallraff 2007, 120–122], esp. 66.1–2, for which the audience is primed by 65.15–16, which immediately precedes it). This earlier divine punishment of Eudoxia is deliberately recalled in the later episode through the repetition of Gen 3:16, so that the later (fatal) episode is presented both as just and a natural ramping up of God's retribution. Here, through the stench (*Or. funeb.* 121.28–31) and the vomiting up of the eucharistic host (*Or. funeb.* 121.22–28), the sacrilege/degradation intuition (associated with disgust) is also being triggered.

24 Mayer 2013b.

Of interest is the emergence of this same narrative of loyalty and betrayal in the anti-Johannite camp. As I and others have pointed out, the narratives that circulated within oppositional circles at the time are largely lost and have to be reconstructed from the few fragments preserved,[25] but we gain a glimpse in two letters written by Theophilus' nephew, Cyril. Cyril tells us in Letter 33 that he came with his uncle to Constantinople in 403 and was present at the Synod of the Oak.[26] In that letter, written after the Council of Ephesus (431),[27] it is the Nicene creed and what it represents that is sacralised and Nestorius is cast as its enemy and as a second intractable and stubborn John.[28] Of greater interest, however, are Letters 75–76, an exchange between Atticus, bishop of Constantinople, and Cyril dated to around 415 CE.[29] Atticus had been prominent as an anti-Johannite and thus situated in the same conceptual camp as Cyril and his uncle.[30] Atticus writes to inform Cyril and other bishops that, under pressure and out of concern for the peace of the church, he has restored John's name and title to the diptychs.[31] He encourages Cyril to do the same in the churches of Egypt.[32] Cyril writes back, accusing Atticus of having betrayed the canons of the church (which he holds up as sacred and inviolate).[33] It is interesting that in this context Cyril makes explicit reference to the act as one that occasions disgust,[34] the emotion associated with triggering of the sanctity/degradation foundation, and goes on to frame his arguments as a matter of what is just and of rules which cannot be bent without causing incalculable harm.[35] John himself is literally called a betrayer of the other bishops with

25 Mayer 2013b, 151–152; Van Nuffelen 2013b, 139–140. See also Elm 1998.

26 Cyril of Alexandria, *Ep*. 33.4 (Schwartz 1929, 148.30–34).

27 He refers to the council several times during the course of the letter. See Cyril of Alexandria, *Ep*. 33.3, 5 (Schwartz 1929, 148.13–15, 39–43).

28 For Nestorius as a second John, see Cyril of Alexandria, *Ep*. 33.4 (Schwartz 1929, 148.34–39).

29 McEnerney 1987b, 83 n. 1 supplies a date range of 412–415 CE. See the edition of Schwartz 1927, 23–28.

30 Atticus succeeded Arsacius as bishop of Constantinople in 406 and proceeded to prosecute the Johannites more vigorously. See Kelly 1995, 279–280, 287–288. The Johannite Palladius, *Dial*. 11 (Malingrey and Leclercq 1988, 216–218), explicitly calls him an arch-enemy.

31 Cyril of Alexandria, *Ep*. 75.1–5 (Schwartz 1927, 23–24, trans. McEnerney 1987b, 83–85). The tone of the letter is highly defensive, anticipating a charge from Cyril of having sold out or betrayed the cause.

32 Cyril of Alexandria, *Ep*. 75.6 (Schwartz 1927, 24 ll.10–25, trans. McEnerney 1987b, 85).

33 Cyril of Alexandria, *Ep*. 76 (Schwartz 1927, 26 l.17–p. 27 l.18, trans. McEnerney 1987b, 86–91), esp. 76.7–9.

34 Cyril of Alexandria, *Ep*. 76.4 (Schwartz 1927, 25 ll.31–32 (ἀηδία), trans. McEnerney 1987b, 87).

35 Cyril of Alexandria, *Ep*. 76.5–7 (Schwartz 1927, 26 ll.1–17, trans. McEnerney 1987b, 87–88).

whom he is inscribed in the diptychs and a Judas to their apostles, and John's predecessor, Nectarius, and successor, Arsacius, become the saintly heroes whom he has betrayed.[36] The narrative that underwrites this anti-Johannite perspective is just as ideological. Both Cyril and ps-Martyrius have identified their enemies. Both hold certain things sacred. Both are immoveable in their stance.

4 Reception

What happens, then, when we move to the late 7th and 8th centuries? This period gives rise to two so-called lives of John, one by Theodore of Trimithus in Cyprus, the other attributed to George of Alexandria, but unlikely to have been authored by him.[37] This second life substantially influences the narrative from the early to mid 8th century onwards.[38] It is a matter of curiosity with regard to the way that the narratives of these two "lives" are framed that the accounts of the pro-Johannite Palladius and the more hostile Socrates, neither of which we have discussed here, are the principle sources.[39] In the 5th and 6th centuries, the highly ideological narrative of ps-Martyrius, with its explicit villains and hero, rapidly fades from sight.[40] A couple of quick observations are

36 Cyril of Alexandria, *Ep*. 76.8 (Schwartz 1927, 26 ll.25–33, trans. McEnerney 1987b, 88).

37 For the argument that the *Vita* post-dates that of Theodore of Trimithus and was written a number of decades after George of Alexandria died, see Baur 1927, 3–6. Halkin (1977, 69) accepts the attribution of the manuscripts and follows Coleman-Norton 1925 in adopting the view that Theodore's *Vita* is later in date and based on that of George. My own view, based on the style of the *Vita* attributed to George, as well as its subsequent influence, is that it better suits the context and literary renaissance of the 8th century, adding to the persuasiveness of Baur's arguments for dating it to the late 7th or first quarter of the 8th century. The style of Theodore's *Vita* is more severe and its focus more aligned with that of the sources of the 5th and 6th centuries.

38 For a survey of the rhetorically elevated homilies in Greek on John and the translation of his relics that appear between the 8th and 10th centuries and their debt to the *Vita* by George of Alexandria, see Antonopoulou 1997, 123–126 and 136–139. Barnes and Bevan 2013, 9–11, discuss a late-tenth-century list of writings that focus on John, indicative of those that were circulating at the time and which the author of the list had at his disposal. It conspicuously references the *Vita* by George, but fails to mention that of Theodore.

39 Theodore of Trimithus, *V. Ioh*. 1–2 (Halkin 1977, 8–9); George of Alexandria, *V. Ioh*. 1 (Halkin 1977, 72). Baur (1927, 7–16) sets out the sources used by George chapter by chapter. For a discussion of the fifth-century sources, including Socrates, see Mayer 2008. We refer to the *vitae* loosely as "lives". Stylistically, the *vita* by Theodore follows the form of a homily.

40 Sozomen is the only author from this period who utilises it. The case that Sozomen borrows from ps-Martyrius was first made by van Ommeslaeghe 1974, 301–313. That the

relevant here. Palladius is the only source that admits that John was at the time charged with treason (καθοσίωσις),[41] as a literal traitor to the imperial court—although Palladius does everything to recast John as a hero and saint, loyal to the true sacred authorities, God and the Church.[42] And Socrates, who cites as genuine a ps-Chrysostomic homily that rails against the empress Eudoxia, staging her as Herodias, responsible for the beheading of John the Baptist,[43] feeds into the growing demonisation of Eudoxia.[44] By the mid 5th century we see the rise of an apocryphal story, first evidenced in the *Life of Epiphanius*, in which Eudoxia is cast as a literal Jezebel (that evil biblical queen), having unfairly confiscated the vineyard of a poor widow.[45] Even without ps-Martyrius' narrative, the casting of Eudoxia as one of the two chief villains in the story has become entrenched.

With Theodore of Trimithus we see an interesting development. While John remains a hero, he is less well fleshed out than the other characters and there is some reconfiguration of the villains in the narrative. Theophilus and Eudoxia continue to play the role of villains extraordinaires,[46] but among the bishops who, in Palladius' and ps-Martyrius' accounts were prominently in cahoots with Theophilus, two—Acacius and Severian—now fluctuate in and out of focus.[47] The episode of the widow's vineyard takes prominence

---

direction of influence was the other way around (that ps. Martyrius borrowed from Sozomen) had been argued by Baur 1929, xix–xx; Wallraff 2007, 18–19, confirms Sozomen's debt to ps-Martyrius.

41 Palladius, *Dial.* 8 (Malingrey and Leclercq 1988, 178.240–247). Palladius claims that the charge was based on the allegation that John had called the empress Eudoxia "Jezebel".

42 On the *Dialogue* as a post-factum legal defence of John and for an analysis of its key rhetorical arguments, see Katos 2011, 33–97.

43 Socrates scholasticus, *Hist. eccl.* 6.18.1–5 (Hansen 1995, 341).

44 See van Ommeslaeghe 1979; Mayer 2013b, 160–162.

45 *Vita Epiphanii* 61 (Dindorf 1859, 67–69). Rapp 1991, vol. 1, 98–102, believes that the production of the original *Vita* in Greek dates to the same period as Sozomen's *Historia ecclesiastica* (ca. mid 5th century).

46 See Theodore of Trimithus, *V. Ioh.* 2 (Halkin 1977, 9), where Eudoxia is listed first as John's chief enemy, Theophilus second, although note that focus on both characters is interwoven: *V. Ioh.* 5–11 (Theophilus), 15 (Eudoxia), 16 (Theophilus), 17–18 (Eudoxia), 19–23 (Theophilus). By *V. Ioh.* 23 Theodore is regularly using the periphrasis οἱ περὶ Θεόφιλον to describe John's enemies, while at *V. Ioh.* 26 (Halkin 1977, 31–32) the two characters are so highly profiled as John's enemies that in this section Eudoxia, her husband, and Theophilus are excommunicated by Innocent, bishop of Rome.

47 At Theodore of Trimithus, *V. Ioh.* 16 (Halkin 1977, 21–22) they are ranged with Flavian of Antioch, John's patron and mentor, against Theophilus, although it should be noted that he still characterises them as hostile to John. The chronology here and in the next sections has considerable gaps, but the implication here appears to be that Flavian, unable to attend because of his age, sent Acacius and Severian to the Synod of the Oak on his behalf.

in demonstrating Eudoxia's evil character,[48] but Epiphanius of Salamis, from whose life the episode is derived, is acquitted of any hostility towards John and is instead construed as defending him on charges of heresy against Eudoxia and as opposing John's exile.[49] In the mid-fifth-century accounts of Socrates and Sozomen he is aligned firmly with Eudoxia and Theophilus against John.[50] That is, while he is construed in those earlier narratives as more of a dupe than a villain (he is primed by Theophilus and sent off to Constantinople like a loaded gun),[51] he is nonetheless located within the anti-Johannite camp. Theodore, on the contrary, now constructs him as a loyal pro-Johannite. Since Theodore is a Cypriot it may well be that this alteration of the narrative is due to his own nationalist loyalties. At the close of his narrative, Theodore introduces one miracle and two visions,[52] the last a dream experienced by Cyril of Alexandria in which he sees John and the *theotokos* together,[53] is rebuked for his condemnation of Nestorius,[54] is restored to communion with John,[55] and is told to enter into communion with all of the pro-Johannite churches.[56] This casts the narrative within a post-Chalcedonian setting and reverses the betrayal motif of Cyril's own letters.

Whereas in the life by Theodore John himself appears in only ten out of forty-one sections and, by contrast with the other protagonists, is somewhat stylised and thinly characterised,[57] in the life by George we for the most part return, in a much more developed and full-blown way, to the traditional

They function somewhat in Theodore's account of events as lackeys rather than as major actors in their own right. Cf. *V. Ioh.* 30 (Halkin 1977, 34–35) where they are sent by the emperor Arcadius as legates to Innocent, bishop of Rome. On the other hand, at *V. Ioh.* 22 (Halkin 1977, 28) Theodore refers to those in Severian's camp as John's accusers.

48 Theodore of Trimithus, *V. Ioh.* 15 (Halkin 1977, 20–21). At the beginning of this section, Eudoxia is compared to Herodias, demonstrating Theodore's familiarity with both Socrates and the *Vita Epiphanii*. The characterisation of Eudoxia as both Herodias and Jezebel is reinforced in *V. Ioh.* 17–18 (Halkin 1977, 22–24).

49 Theodore of Trimithus, *V. Ioh.* 24 (Halkin 1977, 29–30). Eudoxia commands that he sign the document of exile along with all the other bishops. He refuses. Theodore makes it explicit that the rumour that he had signed is false.

50 Socrates scholasticus, *Hist. eccl.* 6.10, 12, 14 (Hansen 1995, 327–328, 333–336); Sozomen, *Hist. eccl.* 8.14–15 (Hansen 2004, 998–1006).

51 Concerning the biases of these sources in regard to Epiphanius' actions, see Mayer 2004, 460–461.

52 Theodore of Trimithus, *V. Ioh.* 38–40 (Halkin 1977, 42–44).

53 Theodore of Trimithus, *V. Ioh.* 40.8–10 (Halkin 1977, 43).

54 Theodore of Trimithus, *V. Ioh.* 40.20–21 (Halkin 1977, 43).

55 Theodore of Trimithus, *V. Ioh.* 40.18–20 (Halkin 1977, 43). In the dream, Christ's mother intercedes with John, asking him to pardon Cyril for her sake.

56 Theodore of Trimithus, *V. Ioh.* 40.22–26 (Halkin 1977, 44).

57 See Theodore of Trimithus, *V. Ioh.* 1, 3–4, 15, 17–18, 20, 22–23, 25.

hero-villain narrative. John himself, our hero, is once more front and centre. The details of his life are significantly embellished. A considerable amount of new material—particularly miracles and visions—is inserted.[58] Sections 2–15 take us from his infancy through his secular education and monastic formation to his ordination to the priesthood, expanding greatly on the brief accounts of that period of his life offered by Palladius, ps-Martyrius, Socrates and Sozomen.[59] Throughout the *Vita* there is the usual line-up of enemies and friends. At the conclusion of George's account, a significantly greater range of John's enemies is—through a significantly greater range of physical sufferings—divinely punished.[60] Among them is sleep deprivation as a result of nightmares.[61] Epiphanius is once again, in accord with the earlier account of Socrates, aligned with Theophilus and cast as a potential enemy of John, but in the end proves to be a staunch enemy rather of the true evil, heterodoxy.[62] John proves orthodox and so Epiphanius, despite the extensive prompting of the enraged Eudoxia, refuses to condemn him[63]—a narrative framing that supports an emphasis throughout the *Vita* on John's heroic role as a champion

58 George of Alexandria, *V. Ioh.* 7–9, 11–13, 18–19, 27, 59, 72 (Halkin 1977, 93–101, 102–106, 116–123, 142–148, 237–238, 272–273). While the miracles are performed by John, the visions are not usually John's own, but visions of John seen by other saintly individuals.

59 Ps-Martyrius is the only author among these earlier sources who offers more than a single section on the topic. Cf. George of Alexandria, *V. Ioh.* 2–15 (Halkin 1977, 73–108); ps-Martyrius, *Or. funeb.* 6–12 (Wallraff 2007, 48–56); Palladius, *Dial.* 5 (Malingrey and Leclercq 1988, 104–114); Socrates scholasticus, *Hist. eccl.* 6.3 (Hansen 1995, 313–314); Sozomen, *Hist. eccl.* 8.2.2–11 (Hansen 2004, 954–958).

60 George of Alexandria, *V. Ioh.* 71 (Halkin 1977, 274–276). The idea of John's enemies undergoing a gruesome death as a result of divine judgment draws on a common rhetorical topos, but in the story of John's life is, prior to George, attributed solely to Eudoxia (ps-Martyrius, see n. 23) and Cyrinus of Chalcedon (Socrates scholasticus, *Hist. eccl.* 6.19.2–3 [Hansen 1995, 343]; Sozomen, *Hist. eccl.* 8.16.4–6 [Hansen 2004, 1008]). Theodore of Trimithus, *V. Ioh.* 33 (Halkin 1977, 38) follows these earlier sources in restricting a punitive death to the same two enemies, without dwelling overly much on the details. By contrast, George, in the mode of ps-Martyrius, provides considerable detail.

61 George of Alexandria, *V. Ioh.* 71 (Halkin 1977, 274–275): Φαντασίαι νυκτεριναὶ εἰς κύνας λυττῶντες καὶ ξιφήρεις βαρβάρους καὶ ἀλλόγλωσσον καὶ κυματώδη φωνὴν ἐξηχοῦντας μετεσχηματίζοντο, ἄϋπνον τὸν ὕπνον ἀποτελοῦσαι.

62 George of Alexandria, *V. Ioh.* 40, 43 (Halkin 1977, 191, 198–200).

63 George of Alexandria, *V. Ioh.* 44 (Halkin 1977, 200–202). In George's account, the confrontation between Epiphanius and Eudoxia is no longer about her trying to compel him to sign the document of exile, but about John's innocence of heresy, and Epiphanius' innocence in John's condemnation and exile. George explicitly has Epiphanius echoing Pilate's refusal to condemn Christ: Ἀθῷός εἰμι ἀπὸ τῆς κρίσεως ταύτης (Halkin 1977, 202.2). Cf. Matt 27.24: Ἀθῷός εἰμι ἀπὸ τοῦ αἵματος τούτου. ("I am innocent of this man's blood.") It is to be noted that both Theodore (*V. Ioh.* 24) and George (*V. Ioh.* 44), since they follow Socrates (*Hist. eccl.* 6.14), are then obliged to explain how John and Epiphanius ended up

of orthodoxy.[64] This particular take on the narrative we last saw developed in the loyalist funeral oration of ps-Martyrius.[65] Ps-Martyrius was an actual follower of John and naturally prompted to construct his ideological narrative.

5 Conclusion

This brings us finally to the question of why we see a return to the sacralisation of right belief at this particular moment in history. Is it just a matter of hagiography and the emergence of a cult of John Chrysostom as a saint in the imperial capital, or does it have to do with a number of anxiety-producing social factors that come into play at this particular period? By the beginning of the 8th century the Byzantine Empire had faced overwhelming territorial losses through successive Persian and Arab invasions. It needed to re-establish its identity.[66] One way of achieving this may well have been to promote a rousing story of a local hero of the city. His loyal pursuit of orthodoxy and triumph over those who had betrayed the faith would have resonated with a city starting to be rent by disagreements over the worship of icons.[67] That the resulting schism was initiated by an imperial decree in 726 is likely to have encouraged covert parallels between the actions of the iconoclast Leo 3 and his son, Constantine 5, as enemies of the church and that of Eudoxia and Arcadius as enemies of John, Constantinople's bishop, in the original Johannite schism. It is noteworthy that prominent in the accounts of both Theodore and George is the imperial couple's excommunication.[68] Given the assumed role of the

exchanging hostile words that foreshadowed their mutual ends. Theodore and George both resort to the mechanism of a false rumour, which John believes.

64 See, e.g., George of Alexandria, *V. Ioh*. 19, 23, 30, 59 (Halkin 1977, 118–123, 135–136, 153–156, 237–239).

65 Ps-Martyrius' framing of John as a champion of Christian orthodoxy and enemy of paganism and heterodoxy (Arianism) is distinctive. See, e.g., *Or. funeb*. 18–26, 49–50, 98–101 (Wallraff 2007, 64–76, 100–102, 154–156).

66 See Brubaker and Haldon 2011, 4.

67 There is perhaps some comparability with the attribution during the period of iconoclasm of a new style of hymn—and consequently a large body of hymns authored in that style—to the "orthodox" iconophile patriarch of Constantinople, Germanos 1 (715–730). On this phenomenon, see Simic 2017. The attribution of the Constantinopolitan eucharistic liturgy to John Chrysostom appears to emerge at around this same period (the 8th to 9th centuries), although Krueger 2014, 115–116, notes that in the late-eighth-century manuscript of the Barberini Euchologian "the liturgy generally attributed to John Chrysostom appears there without attribution".

68 Theodore of Trimithus, V. Ioh. 26–32 (Halkin 1977, 61–67); George of Alexandria, *V. Ioh*. 68–70 (Halkin 1977, 263–272).

Constantinopolitan monasteries as bastions of iconophile support,[69] it is also noteworthy that in a homily by the iconophile John of Damascus, delivered in the first quarter of the 8th century, John is presented equally as an ideal priest and monk and as a champion of orthodoxy.[70] What these ideological narratives with their heroes and villains did for the listener in the troubled 8th century, I suggest, was to foster a sense of outrage when what is held sacred is betrayed, allowing transference from the situation in the fifth-century past to the eighth-century present. In this respect they establish in their audience's minds the memory of an (imaginary) Constantinopolitan past in which the orthodox (however that orthodoxy is construed) were triumphant, whipping up a desire for a past which never existed, but to which the present must by divine right be restored.[71] Ideological narratives arise at moments of conflict for a reason. They are troubled stories for troubled times that take on a new life at similar moments in human history.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

Anonymus (1859) *Vita Epiphanii.* Ed. G. Dindorf, *Epiphanii episcopi Constantiae opera*, vol. 1 (Leipzig), 3–82.

Cyril of Alexandria (1927) *Epistolae* 75–76. Ed. E. Schwartz, *Codex vaticanus gr. 1431: eine antichalkedonische Sammlung aus der Zeit Kaiser Zenos* (Munich), 23–28. Trans. J. I. McEnerney (1987b) *St. Cyril of Alexandria. Letters 1–50*, FC 77 (Washington, DC), 83–91.

Cyril of Alexandria (1929) *Epistola* 33. Ed. E. Schwartz, Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum 1.1.7 (Berlin), 147–150. Trans. J. I. McEnerney (1987a) *St. Cyril of Alexandria. Letters 1–50*, FC 76 (Washington, DC), 128–135.

George of Alexandria (1977) *Vita s. Iohannis Chrysostomi*. Ed. F. Halkin, *Douze récits byzantines sur Saint Jean Chrysostome*, Subsidia hagiographica 60 (Brussels), 70–285.

John of Damascus (1988) *Laudatio sancti Johannis Chrysostomi*. Ed. B. Kotter, *Johannes von Damaksos. Die Schriften, Band 5: Opera homiletica et hagiographica*, PTS 29 (Berlin), 359–370.

69 See Hatlie 2007, 383–393.

70 John of Damascus, *Laud. s. Joh. Chrys.* (Kotter 1988, 359–370). See the analysis of Brottier 2004, 66–94.

71 On the changing view of imperial authority and its relationship to divine authority from the 5th to 8th centuries, see Brubaker and Haldon 2011, 11–17, especially their reference to a post-Islamic-conquest phase of "ideological re-orientation" (14).

Palladius (1988) *Dialogus de vita sancti Iohannis Chrysostomi*. Eds A.-M. Malingrey and P. Leclercq, SC 341 (Paris).

Ps-Martyrius (2007) *Oratio funebris in laudem sancti Iohannis Chrysostomi*. Ed. M. Wallraff, trans. C. Ricci (Spoleto). Trans. T. D. Barnes and G. Bevan (2013) *Funerary Speech for John Chrysostom*, TTH 60 (Liverpool).

Socrates scholasticus (1995) *Historia ecclesiastica*. Ed. G. C. Hansen, *Sokrates. Kirchengeschichte*, GCS NF 1 (Berlin).

Sozomen (2004) *Historia ecclesiastica*. Ed. G. C. Hansen, *Sozomenos. Historia ecclesiastica. Kirchengeschichte*, Fontes Christiani 73, 4 vols (Turnhout).

Theodore of Trimithus (1977) *Vita s. Iohannis Chrysostomi*. Ed. F. Halkin, *Douze récits byzantines*, 8–69.

Secondary Sources

Antonopoulou, T. (1997) *The Homilies of the Emperor Leo VI* (Leiden).

Baur, C. (1927) 'Georgius Alexandrinus', *ByzZ* 27, 1–16.

Baur, C. (1929–1930) *Johannes Chrysostomus und seine Zeit*, 2 vols (Munich).

Bellah, R. N. (ed.) (1973) *Emile Durkheim on Morality and Society* (Chicago).

Brottier, L. (2004) *Figures de l'évêque idéal. Jean Chrysostome, Panégyrique de Saint Mélèce; Jean Damascène, Panégyrique de Saint Jean Chrysostome* (Paris).

Brubaker, L. and Haldon, J. (2011) *Byzantium and the Iconoclast Era c. 680–850: A History* (Cambridge).

Clarke, S. (2014) *The Justification of Religious Violence* (Malden, MA).

Coleman-Norton, P. R. (1925) 'The *Vita sancti Chrysostomi* by Georgius Alexandrinus', *Classical Philology* 20, 69–72.

Durkheim, E. (1915) *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*, Eng. trans. J. W. Swain (London).

Elm, S. (1998) 'The Dog That Did Not Bark. Doctrine and Patriarchal Authority in the Conflict between Theophilus of Alexandria and John Chrysostom of Constantinople', in L. Ayres and G. Jones (eds), *Christian Origins. Theology, Rhetoric and Community* (London), 66–93.

Fauconnier, G. and Turner, M. (2002) *The Way We Think: Conceptual Blending and the Mind's Hidden Complexities* (New York).

Graham, J. and Haidt, J. (2012) 'Sacred Values and Evil Adversaries: A Moral Foundations Approach', in M. Mikulincer and P. R. Shaver (eds), *The Social Psychology of Morality: Exploring the Causes of Good and Evil* (Washington, DC), 11–31.

Greene, J. D. (2013) *Moral Tribes: Emotion, Reason, and the Gap Between Us and Them* (New York).

Haidt, J. (2012) *The Righteous Mind: Why Good People are Divided by Politics and Religion* (New York).

Haidt, J. and Graham, J. (2009) 'Planet of the Durkheimians. Where Community, Authority, and Sacredness are Foundations of Morality', in J. T. Jost, A. C. Kay,

and H. Thorisdottir (eds), *Social and Psychological Bases of Ideology and System Justification* (New York), 371–401.

Hatlie, P. (2007) *The Monks and Monasteries of Constantinople, ca. 350–850* (Cambridge).

Ingram, B. (2013) 'Critical Rhetoric in the Age of Neuroscience'. Unpublished PhD thesis (Amherst).

Katos, D. (2011) *Palladius of Helenopolis: The Origenist Advocate* (Oxford).

Kelly, J. N. D. (1995) *Golden Mouth. The Story of John Chrysostom—Ascetic, Preacher, Bishop* (London).

Kövecses, Z. (2010) *Metaphor: A Practical Introduction* (New York).

Krueger, D. (2014) *Liturgical Subjects: Christian Ritual, Biblical Narrative, and the Formation of the Self in Byzantium* (Philadelphia).

Lakoff, G. (2009) *The Political Mind: A Cognitive Scientist's Guide to Your Brain and its Politics* (New York).

Mayer, W. (2004) 'John Chrysostom as Bishop: the View from Antioch', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 55, 455–466.

Mayer, W. (2008) 'The Making of a Saint. John Chrysostom in Early Historiography', in M. Wallraff and R. Brändle (eds) *Chrysostomosbilder in 1600 Jahren: Facetten der Wirkungsgeschichte eines Kirchenvaters* (Berlin), 39–59.

Mayer, W. (2013a) 'Religious Conflict: Definitions, Problems and Theoretical Approaches', in W. Mayer and B. Neil (eds) *Religious Conflict from Early Christianity to the Rise of Islam*, Arbeiten zur Kirchengeschichte 121 (Berlin), 1–19.

Mayer, W. (2013b) 'Media Manipulation as a Tool in Religious Conflict: Controlling the Narrative Surrounding the Deposition of John Chrysostom', in W. Mayer and B. Neil (eds) *Religious Conflict from Early Christianity to the Rise of Islam*, Arbeiten zur Kirchengeschichte 121 (Berlin), 151–168.

Mayer, W. (2017a) 'Australia's Moral Compass and Societal Wellbeing', in D. Costache, D. Cronshaw and J. R. Harrison (eds) *Wellbeing, Personal Wholeness and the Social Fabric: An Interdisciplinary Approach* (Newcastle upon Tyne), 110–131.

Mayer, W. (2017b) 'A Life of Their Own: Preaching, Radicalisation, and the Early Ps-Chrysostomica in Greek and Latin', in F. P. Barone, C. Macé, and P. Ubierna (eds) *Philologie, herméneutique et histoire des textes entre orient et occident. Mélanges en hommage à Sever J. Voicu* (Turnhout), 977–1004.

Mayer, W. (2018) 'Re-theorizing Religious Conflict: From Early Christianity to Late Antiquity and Beyond', in W. Mayer and C. L. de Wet (eds) *Reconceiving Religious Conflict: New Views from the Formative Centuries of Christianity* (London), 3–29.

Mayer, W. (forthcoming a) 'Preaching Hatred? John Chrysostom, Neuroscience, and the Jews', in C. L. de Wet and W. Mayer (eds) *Revisioning John Chrysostom: New Approaches, New Perspectives* (Leiden).

Mayer, W. (forthcoming b) 'Fundamentalism as a Response to Perceived Threat: Teasing out Some Cognitive Mechanisms at Work', in A. Papanikolaou and G. Demacopoulos (eds) *Tradition, Secularization, Fundamentalism* (New York).

Mayer, W. (forthcoming c) 'Severian and John on Authority: Exploring the Agency in the Johannite Schism of their Preaching', in P. Van Deun and J. Segers (eds) *John Chrysostom and Severian of Gabala: Homilists, Exegetes and Theologians* (Leuven).

Musolff, A. (2007) 'What Role do Metaphors play in Racial Prejudice? The Function of Antisemitic Imagery in Hitler's *Mein Kampf*', *Patterns of Prejudice* 41.1, 21–43.

Musolff, A. (2012) 'Immigrants and Parasites: The History of a Bio-social Metaphor', in M. Messer et al. (eds) *Migrations: Interdisciplinary Perspectives* (Wien), 249–258.

Musolff, A. (2017) 'Truths, Lies and Figurative Scenarios: Metaphors at the Heart of Brexit', *Journal of Language and Politics: Online-First Articles*, 12 April, DOI: 10.1075/jlp.16033.mus.

Rapp, C. (1991) 'The *Vita* of Epiphanius of Salamis—an Historical and Literary Study'. Unpublished PhD thesis. 2 vols (Oxford).

Simic, K. (2017) 'Liturgical Poetry in the Middle Byzantine Period: Hymns Attributed to Germanos 1, Patriarch of Constantinople (715–730)'. Unpublished PhD thesis (Brisbane).

Van Nuffelen, P. (2013a) 'Palladius and the Johannite Schism', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 64, 1–19.

Van Nuffelen, P. (2013b) 'Theophilus against John Chrysostom: The Fragments of a Lost *liber* and the Reasons for John's Deposition', *Adamantius* 19(1), 138–155.

van Ommeslaeghe, F. (1974) 'De lijkrede voor Johannes Chrysostomus toegeschreven aan Martyrius van Antiochie. Textuitgave met Commentaar, Hoofdstukken uit de Historische Kritiek'. Unpublished PhD thesis (Leuven).

van Ommeslaeghe, F. (1979) 'Jean Chrysostome en conflit avec l'impératrice Eudoxie. Le dossier et les origines d'une légende', *Analecta Bollandiana* 97, 131–159.

CHAPTER 13

"As if in a Vision of the Night …": Authorising the Healing Spring of Chonai

Alan H. Cadwallader

On a narrow spur protruding with almost sheer cliff-faces 200 metres above the Maeander Valley in south-west Turkey[1] lay the sanctuary of Apollo Lairbenos. Its inner sanctum was at the ridge's outermost point of this "impressive and wild site",[2] now called Asartepe. For all its rugged isolation, the rural site drew pilgrims from a number of cities and villages,[3] and appears to have been claimed by the civic authority of Hierapolis, at least in providing iconography and legend for some of its second- and third-century coins.[4] The published inscriptions reveal the nominal intent of the visitors from such a broad catchment—they were dedicants, confessors and, of particular significance,

1 Buckler, Calder and Guthrie 1933, xv. In recent times, the river has been dammed. Even so, the height above the reservoir waters, and the position of the headland behind a hilly rise at its entrance, retain the sense of remoteness.

2 Miller 1985, 49.

3 Tullia Ritti has provided the most up-to-date list of civic or rustic origins: Atyochorion (village?) Blaundon, Dionysopolis, Eriza, Hierapolis, Kallokepos (?), Krouleus (?), Laodicea, Mamakome (village), Motella, Nanulon (village), Tripolis. See Ritti, Şimşek and Yıldız 2000. To this list, should be added Mossyna, Kibales and the koinon of the Hyrgaleis: Akıncı Öztürk and Tanrıver 2008, 95–96 (Mossyna) and 100–101 (Hyrgalis) and 2010, 47–48 §7 (Kibale). The question of the origins of the epithet to Apollo remains obscure. Perhaps an indigenous toponym (cf. Apollo Kareios) rather than an amalgamation with an indigenous deity needs to be investigated; compare Brixhe 1987, 51.

4 *British Museum Coins, Phrygia*, 54–66 (Head 1906, 236–238 and Plate 30.6); *RPC* 4.2070 (cf. 2069), 9991–9993. Louis Robert (Robert 1962², 141) reckoned that Hierapolis did not control the sanctuary until the Roman imperial period. Certainly, that control appears to be settled from the 2nd century, though Thonemann 2011, 157, dates it to the third. A harmony (*homonoia*) coin between Hierapolis and Ephesos (244–249 CE) shows a radiate Apollo Lairbenos with identifying legend portrayed on the obverse and joined hands with identifying legend on the reverse (*British Museum Coins, Phrygia*, Head 1906, Plate 52.3). The iconography points to a Hierapolitan rather than an Ephesian minting. When Hierapolis was awarded the status of *neokoros* (official provincial guardian of the imperial cult) in the 3rd century, Apollo Lairbenos was identified as one of the city's patron gods (*SNG Slg. Aulock* 3627–3628); cf. Hygeia, Serapis and others.

© KONINKLIJKE BRILL NV, LEIDEN, 2018 | DOI:10.1163/9789004375710_015

manumitters or conveyors of their (perhaps young)[5] slaves and children by registering them (καταγράφαι) with the god of the sanctuary, Apollo.[6] The motivation behind the release of the slaves, as also other dedications, is frequently, though not exclusively,[7] given as κατὰ ἐπιταγήν or, in its pleonastic form, κατὰ τὴν τοῦ θεοῦ ἐπιταγήν "under instruction from the god";[8] alternately or even in combination, the motivation is named as a (divine) dream: κατὰ (θεῖον) ὄνιρον.[9] Most commentators consider the two forms to be virtually synonymous.[10]

These inscriptions date from the late Hellenistic period and run into the 3rd century CE, when an egalitarian claim on communication from the divine through dreams and visions began to emerge.[11] They do not provide details of what the god looked like, although he is occasionally called ἐπιφανής,[12] which may allude to something like the radiate form in which Apollo appeared on coins from Hierapolis, rather than simply his manifestation.[13] Presumably, when Apollo Lairbenos appeared in a dream, he was so recognised, whether by an ancient anthropomorphic shape or the sound of his voice or through some symbol such as his double-sided axe (*bipennis*).[14] What is clear is that, well into the 3rd century CE, high and low members of the population registered the

---

5 The two terms dominating the description of assignees/manumitted in the inscriptions are θρεπτός/ή and its cognate (τε)θρεμένος/η, indicating, at least, that they are young dependants in a household. The terms can indicate house-born slaves.

6 Ritti's collection concentrates on the dedications and *katagraphai*. The sub-group of dedications, labeled confessions, is the focus of Petzl 1994. The three categories are found in the more recent publications of Akıncı Öztürk and Tanrıver 2008, 2009, 2010.

7 See Ritti 2000, D18, D23 cf. Akıncı Öztürk and Tanrıver 2008, §12, 19 where the more common deployment of εὐχή, "vow", (or cognate) is found, though restricted to dedications of material objects, not slaves or children (cf. δωρεᾶς χάρειν, "to offer gifts"; Ritti 2000, K44). Sometimes no designation of motivation is given. On one inscription the motivating description is "as the god revealed" (ὡς ἐδήλωσε ὁ θεός): see Akıncı Öztürk and Tanrıver 2008, §15.

8 See, as examples, *MAMA* IV.277A (I), 277A (II); Ritti 2000, K39, K51; Akıncı Öztürk and Tanrıver 2008, §1.

9 See, as examples, *MAMA* IV.276B (I), 276A (III); Ritti 2000, K38; Akıncı Öztürk and Tanrıver 2009, 92 §10.

10 See Renberg 2010, 35; compare van Straten 1976, 14. The words occur together: "instruction in a dream" (κατὰ ἐπιταγὴν ὀνείρου) in Mihailov 1958–1970/2, 680, 1997/5, 5220 cf. *IKIznik* 1071 (κατὰ χρηματισμὸν ὀνίρου).

11 Parker 2004, 276; Moyer 2011, 151, 168–169; cf. Veyne 1986, who opts for a post-Flavian development.

12 See, as examples, Ritti 2000, D6, 12; K3, 55.

13 *RPC* 4.2069, 2070, 9991–9993; by comparison with Colossae, Hierapolis does not display discrete monetary representations of Helios in the Roman period.

14 Petridou 2015 provides a thorough taxonomy of the various forms in which the gods could be manifest.

experience and understanding of a divine dream, regardless of the critical scepticism that was part of debates about dreams in elite literary circles.[15] That this is no rural idiosyncrasy is demonstrated by inscriptions with the same emphasis on dream/instruction throughout the Greco-Roman world—more than 1300 according to Gil Renberg[16]—including many from Phrygia and Caria.[17] It is unlikely that Colossae (Chonai), a city in the Lycus Valley about 25 kilometres to the south-east of Hierapolis, could have escaped this cultural expression of religious devotion.

The sanctuary of Apollo Lairbenos was not a healing site,[18] even though there is a small number of thanksgiving inscriptions.[19] Nor is there extant any clue as to the legitimation of its foundation, even though scholars are generally agreed that the epithet, Lairbenos in its many spellings, reflects an indigenous origin blended with the Seleucid-backed cult of Apollo. There is no evidence of Christian appropriation or destruction of the site, not even crudely-written names in the genitive flanked by crosses, such as litter the sacred oracle site of Apollo at Klaros to the west. It seems that the arduous two-day climb to the sanctuary precincts,[20] that was doubtless part of the ascetic practice of the devotee,[21] simply consigned the site to oblivion once Christianity was in the ascendancy. Certainly, by the time of the Synod of Laodicea (365 CE), the church was preoccupied with re-establishing the discipline of its own house, in the aftermath of the abrupt demise of Emperor Julian's pagan revival.[22]

---

15 See Plato *Laws* 10.910A (Bury, 1926, 384); Diogenes *fr. 9* Col. 6 11.6–8 (Smith 1993, 192); see Clay 1989, 318–319, 333–334, and generally, Harris 2009.

16 Renberg 2010, 35.

17 See, for example, *ITralles* 15; *BE* 1969.545; *SEG* 33.857; Körte 1900, 418 §29.

18 The healing sanctuary of Men Karou was much closer to Laodicea and Hierapolis, near Trapezopolis on the rise of the Taurus range on the southern edge of the Lycus Valley.

19 Ritti 2000, D7; cf. Akıncı Öztürk and Tanrıver 2008, §§4, 20. No reason is given for these "thanksgivings" although the latter two inscriptions credit Apollo Lairbenos with being a hearing god, as evidenced elsewhere; see Şimşek 2009, 677.

20 Apollo Lairbenos lies 34 km to the north-east of Hierapolis as the crow flies. The steep rise and sometimes difficult terrain would likely double that distance for travellers (a distance of 60 km by road). The drawing power of the site is perhaps to be inferred from a second, much closer, Apollo sanctuary—to Apollo Kareios—only a third of the distance from Hierapolis (approximately 11.5 km direct) near modern Güzelpınar, overlooking the Lycus Valley.

21 Note the use of ἀναβαίνω in *MAMA* IV.283, 289.

22 The synod's canons are preoccupied with church governance (Canons 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 11–28, 30, 35, 36, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59 [60]) and heresy or Judaism (Canons 6, 7, 8, 29, 37 [where heretics and Jews are collated], 38), sometimes combining the two (Canons 9, 10, 31, 32, 33, 34). References to non-Christians occur rarely: in tangential reference (Canon 30), directly (Canon 39) (Mansi 1759, 563–74).

The conciliar canons of Laodicea had a city-focus; the country was marginalised into an enforced dependency.[23] But Colossae's fame had begun to reside in a nearby rural sanctuary, one that looked, at least in part, to a dream to establish legitimacy for the site.

1 The Healing Spring of Colossae

Colossae, for which no evidence of connection with Apollo Lairbenos or Men Karou has been found, had its own sacred site. Four kilometres to the south-south-west of the city centre, and possibly connected by a sacred way, lay a healing spring at the foot of Mt Cadmus/Honazdağ.[24] Towering over the site is a massive monolith that protrudes from the slopes of the mountain; it may bear the remains of an inscription to "Saviour", likely an epithet applied to Zeus.[25] As often with sacred sites, the landscape joins forces with the cultivation of cultic practice and sacred testimony.[26] The earliest textual reference to the site certainly accents the striking geographical phenomena.[27] The popular version of the *Story of the Archistrategos St Michael of Chonai* stems from the second half of the 4th century,[28] sometime after the Synod of Laodicea, with

23 Canon 57 reads: Ὅτι οὐ δεῖ ἐν ταῖς κώμαις καὶ ἐν ταῖς χώραις καθίστασθαι ἐπισκόπους, ἀλλὰ περιοδευτάς· τοὺς μέν τοι ἤδη προκατασταθέντας, μηδὲν πράττειν ἄνευ γνώμης τοῦ ἐπισκόπου τοῦ ἐν τῇ πόλει· ὡσαύτως δὲ καὶ τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους μηδὲν πράττειν ἄνευ τῆς γνώμης τοῦ ἐπισκόπου (Mansi 1759, 574); ("It is not lawful for bishops to be appointed in villages and the country but rather as visitors; those previously appointed are to execute nothing without the consent of the bishop of the [local] city. Likewise also, the priests [appointed in villages and the country] are to do nothing without the consent of the [city] bishop").

24 See Cadwallader 2015, 180–203. The specifics of the location—whether Colossae and/or Chonai—cannot be addressed here. Suffice to say that the topographical referents and the constant emphasis on a rural setting far better locate the site at the modern Göz picnic ground west of Honaz near Emirazizli, rather than at the traditional site of the Church of St Michael on the banks of the Lycus (Aksu) River; *pace* Thonemann 2011, 82–83.

25 [ΣΩ]THP. Apollo and Heracles are also contenders. All three are found on Colossae's Hellenistic coins. However, the weight differentials in the coins reinforce the suggestion that Zeus is Colossae's pre-eminent patron.

26 See Cadwallader 2009.

27 See Bonnet 1890, 3.6–7 = ch 2.2 (the spring); 12.5–6, 18.1–2 = 8.1, 12.3 (the monolith); 18.8, 19.5–6 = 12.4–5 (the ravine); 18.17–19.1 = 12.4 (the rock formations). Here, the edition of Max Bonnet is used, citing page and line number. A new edition that incorporates further manuscript evidence is in preparation. An English translation may be found in Cadwallader 2011b and is here referred to by chapter (ch) and chapter section number.

28 Four other versions of the story exist, all recast not only with the usual Byzantine high-literary imprint, but also with careful adjustment of its discerned theological mis-directions, not least about Laodicea. I argue here and elsewhere that the popular version of the

whose canons (most especially Canon 35) it locks horns.[29] That canon forbids the worship of angels, and reads:

> Ὅτι οὐ δεῖ Χριστιανοὺς ἐγκαταλείπειν τὴν ἐκκλησίαν τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ ἀπιέναι καὶ ἀγγέλους **ὀνομάζειν** καὶ **συνάξεις** ποιεῖν, ἅπερ ἀπηγόρευται. Εἴ τις οὖν εὑρεθῇ ταύτῃ τῇ κεκρυμμένῃ **εἰδωλολατρίᾳ** σχολάζων, ἔστω ἀνάθεμα, ὅτι ἐγκατέλιπε τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν, τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ **εἰδωλολατρείᾳ** προσῆλθεν.
>
> Christians shall not forsake the Church of God and turn to the worship of angels, thus having gatherings in their honour. This is forbidden. Those who devote themselves to this hidden idolatry, let them be anathema, because they have forsaken our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and gone over to idolatry.[30]

The three terms ὀνομάζειν (to name), εἰδωλολατρία (idolatry), and συνάγω (gathering) feature prominently in the *Michael of Chonai* story related to the battle with Laodicea. The story deliberately appropriates the canonical language and inserts it into the popular narrative, as part of its construction of a Laodicea as an "unjust people" (ὁ λαὸς τῆς ἀδικίας).[31]

A foundation story that originates in a dream begins the process of converting a site formerly shared by Christians and non-Christians to an exclusively Christian domain.[32] Nevertheless, this story has all the hallmarks of a pre-Christian foundation narrative,[33] just as the series of epiphanies of St Michael the archangel that unfold in defence of the re-founded *hagiasma* (holy spring)

---

story is to be dated late in the second half of the 4th century (*contra* Thonemann 2011, 77 [8th century]), given the close ties with pagan textual forebears (foundation dream and epiphanic defence), the Synod of Laodicea, the background allusions to Julian's program and the Trinitarian emphases over against the idolatry (read Arianism) of Laodicea. Even so, like the *Acts of Philip*, the popular version of *Michael of Chonai* passed through a series of aggregations and modifications, not least wrought by the iconoclast crises of the 8th and 9th centuries. See Cadwallader 2011a.

29 See Cadwallader 2013.

30 An expanded text from MS Vindobonensis is reproduced in Ioannou 1962, 144–145. The inclusive translation is by Johnson 2009, 2.302; cf. Hefele 1876, 317.

31 Bonnet 11.10 = ch 7.4. The phrase is a pointed bowdlerising of the name of the city. A similar distortion is found in an *Encomium for St Mocius* about the governor of Laodicea on the Europa River in Thrace; see Delehaye 1912, 185 (ch 13.3).

32 Bonnet 3.13 = ch 3.1.

33 For a substantial list of foundation-authorising dreams, see van Straten 1976, 16 n. 239.

are dependent on earlier models.[34] There is a dream or vision of the archistrategos Michael granted to an unnamed man from a named city, Laodicea. The man had been part of the opposition to the advance of Christian usage of the hagiasma.[35] He had a daughter, mute from birth. The *taxiarch* (leader of the angelic forces) of the Lord instructs him to take the girl to the water and believe.[36] The events unfold positively. The man secures the name to attach to the application of the waters; the child's healing is manifest in a loud acclamation; his commitment is secured and he erects a shrine to the name of Michael the archistrategos (ch 3).

2 The Elements of a Dream Foundation Narrative

The story as sketched here resonates with epiphany stories associated with sacred sites, both in their foundation and in their on-going existence. The eight key elements are the dream, an epiphanic (angelic) being, divine instruction, call to belief, a miraculous demonstration, acclamation, allegiance and a thank-offering, though not all narratives contain all elements. It will be useful to proceed through them, noting their parallels in other Christian and non-Christian texts.

2.1 *The Dream*

Dreams find both literary and epigraphical record in the Maeander and Lycus Valleys.[37] These dreams were frequently at night (ἐννύχος / νυκτός)[38] but could also occur in the daytime.[39] Indeed, one inscription from Thyatira boldly proclaims that help might come "through a vision by night or day."[40] Sometimes

34 See Cadwallader 2018.

35 καταστρέψαι runs through the story as the objective of those opposed to the Christian control of the site, beginning with this man and his associates (Bonnet 3.18 = ch 3.2; 5.4 = 3.6; 8.15 = 5.2; 9.1 = 5.3; 12.2 = 7.4).

36 The same call by the archistrategos Michael to believe recurs at the end of the story, delivered to the custodian Archippos who is terrified of the forces arrayed against him and the hagiasma (Bonnet 15.16 = ch 11.5). Even so, Archippos is described as the child of faithful, Christian parents (Bonnet 5.8 = ch 4.1) and a defender of the orthodox faith (as expressed in ascetic practice: Bonnet 7.10 = ch 4.6).

37 Compare Aelius Aristides, *Hieroi Logoi* (*Sacred Tales*); *SEG* 51.2132; Petzl 1994, §106; *IGR* 1,5 1162.

38 *Carmina Epigraphica Graeca* (Hansen 1989/2.860), *IG* 4.1 (Fränkel 1902, 122, l.16); *Die Inschriften von Knidos* (Blümel 1992, 131), *SEG* 53.454.

39 *IGUR* 1.184 cf. Maximus of Tyre 9.7.

40 διὰ ὁράματος νυκτὸς καὶ ἡμέρας (*TAM* 5.2 1055), dating to the 2nd or 3rd century.

the vision or dream is indicated by sleep or the semblance thereof.[41] At other times this is disavowed, possibly to accentuate the reality of the experience.[42] An allusive reference enhances the reality yet mystery of the experience by focusing on the content rather than the mechanism or setting through which it was delivered. This can be signaled through the use of ὡς/δοκέω, "as if/it seems" as in Aelius Aristides' retelling, even against his own question, "who among human beings is sufficient to declare these things in words?"[43] The same allusive sweep occurs in the Michael story (4.2 = ch 3.3), where the experience is related in words but the use of ὡς suggests that words cannot meet the demands placed upon them, even if they accurately point towards the reality.[44]

2.2 *An Epiphanic Being*

Recognition of the being appearing in a dream or vision is sometimes obvious, as in the dream of Asclepios at Epidauros where the god was identical to his statue in the temple.[45] Even though, at the beginning, the Laodicean had yet to learn the name(s) of the divine beings orchestrating events, a manifestation of an angel, as messenger or form of the god,[46] is quite familiar in oral and visual communications.[47] According to an earlier account of a day vision granted the Argonauts that led to the foundation of the "Sosthenion" temple in Chalcedon, the figure was humanoid with eagle-like wings. The temple's name was coined because the vision inspired a military victory.[48] Our narrative designates

41 ἔδοξε καθ' ὕπνον (*IG* 10.2.1.255, l.3. Many visions of Asclepios are attached to sleep; see LiDonnici 1995, *Stele A* ll.15–16, 37, 49 in standard phrasing.

42 *POxy* 1381; *IG* 14.1014.

43 Aelius Aristides *Hieroi Logoi* 2.33 (Behr 1981). Aristides of course claims just such an extraordinary position, going on to assert that initiates in fact do know, although whether words are adequate to describe the divine remains a caveat on his (and others') linguistic efforts. See Petsalis-Diomidis 2006, 197 and 206 n. 22.

44 This becomes important later in the Michael of Chonai story when the ineffability of God is expressed (Bonnet 16.5–13 = ch 11.6).

45 *IG* 4.1.127. Compare the tradition of Constantine's dream of the archangel Michael that fitted the cult-statue of a winged being in the pagan Sosthenion at Constantinople; this led to a re-foundation of the Sosthenion (an Argonaut site—see below) to a Christian church under the archistrategos' patronage, with its healing waters retained: John Malalas, *Chron.* 4.13 (Jeffreys, Jeffreys and Scott 1986, 38).

46 The debate over whether angels were messengers or were to be identified as one of the manifestations of the god cannot be entered here. Some are clearly legates (Petzl 1994, §3); others blur into the god (*SEG* 32.1539).

47 *SEG* 49.1717, 1719. See Paz de Hoz 1999; Horsley and Luxford 2016.

48 John Malalas, *Chron.* 4.13 (Jeffreys, Jeffreys and Scott 1986, 38).

Michael as a taxiarch and shortly after, *archistrategos*, rather than archangel.[49] These are military designations—John Arnold translates *archistrategos* as "Field Marshal".[50] They were visually evocative to pagan and Christian alike,[51] and here the story initially accents the appearance rather than the command.[52] The one who enters the story as an antagonistic unbeliever therefore requires an implicit narrative background so that recognition can occur.[53] The angel adopts a stand-over posture (ἐπίσταται 4.2 = ch 3.3)[54] familiar in epiphanies ranging back to Homer,[55] and found in one of the most famous epiphany inscriptions, from Lindos on the island of Rhodes.[56]

A further support for pagan recognition of angels is found in onomastics.[57] Names and toponyms using "angel" date back at least to the 4th century BCE and, whilst they may at times be evoking an attribute of, for example, Hermes,[58] they are generally to be grouped as theonyms, or divine names.[59] A recognition of pre-Christian angels at Colossae may therefore be indicated by a rare name that occurs in a first—or second-century epitaph: Angelikos.[60]

---

49 Archangel (ἀρχάγγελος) is reserved for the heading to the story. Horsley and Luxford 2016, 174, do not consider ἀρχάγγελος a necessarily Christian tag.

50 Arnold 2013, 6.

51 They bore distinctly Greek epithets; such officials could be resplendent in festival gatherings; see *IG* 10.124, 334.

52 ὅραμα rather than ἐπιταγή, "command". See van Straten 1976, 13.

53 The issue is acknowledged in the late Byzantine revision of the story by Simeon Metaphrastes, who wrote that "the appearance had a certain intelligible nature to him, a prescient dream" (ἡ δὲ ὄψις ἦν νοερά τις αὐτῷ φύσις ὄναρ παρεστηκυῖα); Bonnet 22.22–23. (Note that the Metaphrastes' version is included in the publication of the popular version by Bonnet).

54 Some manuscripts tried to mollify the suggestion of threat or domination, by changing the word to παρίσταται; see the apparatus in Bonnet 4. This suggests that there was thought to be a distinction between the two words. The description of Echidna in the opening chapter positions her above two snakes (ἦν ἐπισταμένη ἐπάνω; Bonnet 2.5 = ch 1.2). Occasionally this word is found in dream inscriptions to indicate the presence of the god (Petzl 1994, §106 = *MAMA* IV.279), and it may, because of its use as an epithet for divine beings, have been thought appropriate for the archangel. See van Straten 1976, 13.

55 Homer *Iliad* 10.496–497: κακὸν γὰρ ὄναρ κεφαλῆφιν ἐπέστη τὴν νύκτ' ("an evil dream stood over his head that night" [Murray and Wyatt 1999, 484]); Herodotus 5.56.1 (Godley 1922, 60).

56 Blinkenberg and Kinch 1941, 2.2.D.1, l.14; cf. *IG* 10.2.1.255, l.3, *IGR* 1,5 1162 [reconstruction].

57 Horsley and Luxford 2016, 157 briefly note the possibilities.

58 See Horsley and Luxford 2016, 143, 157 ("Euangelios is a byname for Hermes").

59 See generally, Parker 2000. His focus is Attica but the general observations are transferrable.

60 Ἀ[ν/γ]γελικός: *MDAI*(*A*) 18.206 §3. He is the father of Dionysios, the bearer of another theonym. The name, as far as I have been able to find, is known from only two other inscriptions: *IGUR* (Moretti 1968–1990/4, 160), *RECAM* 4.158. Other cognates building on Ἄγγέλος / Ἀνγέλος are reasonably widespread (37 varieties in *LGPN online*).

2.3 *Divine Instruction*

Whilst many accounts of dreams and visions are perfunctory and reductionist, leaving nothing more than some action or response dictated by a divine dream or instruction,[61] some texts, literary and epigraphical, deliver a more extensive narrative. Aelius Aristides, for example, in one of his long string of reported medical treatments, recounts the directive from Asclepios to immerse himself in a river. The instruction itself is given in succinct indirect speech. But Aristides then embellishes it with a parade of his aquatic frolics, ensuring he mentions doctors, friends and strangers as witnesses.[62] Sometimes, the god moves in to command such an account.[63] References to a god speaking occasionally occur, most especially in the detail of the steps to take for a healing.[64] A certain Athenian named Ambrosia, blind in one eye, reported the god speaking to her (εἰπεῖν) about her ignorant skepticism that required atonement, with healing to follow at the god's hands.[65] Similarly, *Michael of Chonai* has the divine being speaking.[66] As with a number of healing stories, other devotees or officials, such as a torch-bearer [πυρφόρος], enter the scene to assist the supplicant, sometimes expanding the requirements to be executed.[67]

2.4 *Call to Belief*

The call to believe is not of Christian origin.[68] The content of the belief appears to be directly related to the formation or deepening of a compact between the god and the devotee / supplicant grounded in the deed performed by the god and the appropriate response of the recipient.[69] The devotee / supplicant can even be called "the devotee / the faithful one".[70] A number of inscriptions testify to the atonement to be made for a failure to believe, whether or not some physical punishment for disbelief had occurred.[71] Belief in the agent of a god,

61 See, for example, *SEG* 37.1019; *AE* (1996) 1147.

62 Aristides, *Hieroi Logoi* 2.295–6 (Behr 1981). Compare, however, the assessment of Petsalis-Diomidis 2006, 194–195.

63 *IMT Kaikos* 932 (Barth and Stauber 1993).

64 There are even accounts registering a dialogue between the supplicant and the god: LiDonnici 1995, *Stele A* ll.68–71.

65 LiDonnici 1995, *Stele A*, ll.38, 39.

66 λέγει αὐτῷ: Bonnet 4.3 = Ch 3.

67 LiDonnici 1995, *Stele A*, ll.43–44.

68 See Belayche 2007; Morgan 2015.

69 See *IG* 4.1.121; *IGLS* 21.2.64.

70 ὁ πιστός: *SEG* 44.1528 (engraving on a gem).

71 *SEG* 33.1012; *SEG* 57.1185; LiDonnici 1995, *Stele A*. ll.33–41; cf. 22–33.

such as a priest, could be required[72] and in the instigating instrument, namely, oracles and dreams.[73]

The accent on belief can be discerned in its inclusion in the poor person's alphabet-oracle stations. These lists of conventional wisdom maxims, arranged alphabetically according to their first letters, are known in many places, including Hierapolis. By the rolls of a dice or astragalus, supposedly divinely-controlled, a response was delivered to a consultation. One piece of advice reads: "Flee fair-weather friends; but trust whoever are the leaders."[74] Belief could be extolled as a virtue of the deceased;[75] it became personified as divine *Fides*.[76] In the Michael story, the trustworthiness of the visionary figure is emphasised by drawing upon an ancient oath formula: "Mark my name."[77] The oath recurs in instructional form at the end of the story but there the focus is moved from Michael to God and his archangel.[78] In any case, it appears that the expression was so tied to pagan identity that it evaporated from Christian usage; it was dropped from later versions of the story.[79] Generally the oath was associated with Zeus, although other gods, or the gods in general, could be encompassed.[80] The tension in our story is that the Laodicean does not know the name. This would only be rolled out once the man attended the site, witnessed what occurs there and asked those who already frequented the healing spring.[81]

---

72 *SEG* 2.481.

73 *SEG* 59.286, ll.8–9.

74 Φαύλους φεῦγε φίλους, πίστευε δὲ τοῖσιν ἀρίστοις; Ritti 1985, 130–135 (l. 21); Nollé 2007, 226–227. Two such inscriptions from Hierapolis are dated to the 2nd or 3rd century CE and the responding god was deemed to be Apollo Kareios.

75 Ramsay 1897, 477 §343. Compare Adak *et al* 2008, 94 no. 19.

76 Morgan 2015, 129–132.

77 μὰ τὸ ὄνομά μου (Bonnet 4.5 = ch 3.3). See, for examples of its usage, Athenaeus *Deipn.* 6.226d (Gulick 1929, 20), 8.335c (Zeus [Gulick 1930, 22]); *Greek Anthology* 9.317.4–5 (Hermes), 368.1 (Bacchus), 100.3 (the gods in general [Paton 1917, 52, 172, 200]). The ubiquity of such a formula may have forced its way into Latin usage, as in the exclamation *mehercule* (Ps-Quintilian *Decl. Min.* 260.15 [Shackleton Bailey 2006, 142]).

78 Bonnet 18.14–15 = ch 12.4.

79 A rare pagan-Christian battle over the use of Μά in an oath formula is well-illustrated in the *Story of St Lucillian*, set in the time of the emperor Aurelian (270–275 CE). The pagan courtier calls on Lucillian to μὰ τοὺς θεούς "Observe the gods" (3.17). The elderly, former pagan priest Lucillian wrests the formula away from its usual reference (3.20): Μὰ τὸν κύριόν μου Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν ("Observe my Lord Jesus Christ"). See Delehaye 1912, 189.

80 See further Cadwallader 2012, 43–45.

81 Bonnet 4.7–10 = ch 3.3.

2.5 *Miraculous Demonstration*

The healing of a person who is dumb is well known in the aretological lists that extol the power of the god and the fitness of the sacred place where the healing occurs. A temporary loss of speech is recorded in an inscription at Apollo Lairbenos, a punishment from the god, which is overcome right at the moment that a stele narrating the infirmity has been prepared.[82] A young boy, apparently mute from birth, like the child in this story, is recorded at Epidauros coming to the sanctuary for healing, which becomes manifest when he says aloud that he promises to return for a further sacrifice in a year.[83] Similarly, the Laodicean and his daughter come to a spring that has already gained a reputation for healings.[84] The significance of this miracle is in the acclamation that parades both the healing and its agent, and also in the response that follows.

2.6 *Acclamation*

It is unremarkable that healings of mutes be reported by some ejaculation of speech. In two examples from Epidauros, a boy speaks (ἔφα … ἔλεγε), a girl bellows (βοῆι).[85] In our story, the girl yells and shouts (ἀναβόησεν … ἔκραξεν).[86] Given that the focus is not upon the benefaction but rather the benefactor, it is the content of the girl's acclamation that is crucial, that is, the address of the second half of her cry: "Great is your power, O Michael, archistrategos!"[87] Power, of course, is the province of the gods.[88] This ascription of greatness to a named divinity is found throughout Asia Minor, applied to single deities and to groups. It denotes allegiance and the organization of one's life around that devotion.[89] Aelius Aristides esteems Asclepios, with the whole band of witnesses noted above, "shouting that celebrated phrase, 'Great is Asclepios'."[90] Christians have been attuned to such acclamations for Artemis from the Acts

82 Petzl 1994, §1.

83 LiDonnici 1995, *Stele A* ll.41–48.

84 Bonnet 3.10–14 = ch 3.1.

85 LiDonnici 1995, *Stele A* ll.46, 47; *Stele C* ll.2–3. A third story of the healing of a mute appears to use ἐφθέγξατο ("he spoke out") (*Stele C* ll.47–9).

86 Bonnet 4.14, 15 = ch 3.4.

87 μεγάλη σου ἡ δύναμις Μιχαὴλ ἀρχιστράτηγε (Bonnet 4.15–16 = ch 3.4). It is important to recognise the difference between the dawning affirmation of the first half of her cry (ὁ θεὸς τῶν χριστιανῶν ἀληθῶς; "God is truly of the Christians") and the direct address of the second half. See, for more extensive argumentation, Cadwallader 2009, 223 n. 44.

88 Petzl 1994, §47; *IG* 1^3 76.

89 On the importance of the name and its consequences in one's circumstances, see Versnel 2011, 272, 515.

90 Aelius Aristides, *Hieroi Logoi* 2.21.

of the Apostles (19:34).[91] Whatever god was in view became the one acclaimed as great. Small gems, on rings or pendants, also carry these ascriptions, indicating how personal such acclamations could be.[92]

In some texts, the emphatic exclusivity is reinforced by the assertion that greatness attaches to the name of the (one and only) god.[93] This name becomes identified from its context, sometimes immediately apparent from the iconography. Thus, one gem that reads "Great is the name of the holy god" has an engraving of Aphrodite on its reverse;[94] another has "Great is the name in this place of the only Lord God", with a female deity (perhaps Cybele) holding palm and perhaps a wreath beneath a sun and moon.[95] The "Mark my name" earlier in the chapter is now anchored. It is, however, tied specifically to Michael's power;[96] only later in the story will this be transferred to God by a restoration of the more biblical turn of phrase: "I am the archistrategos of the power of the Lord".[97] A Lydian inscription provides a noteworthy parallel to the earlier phrasing in the story: "One God in the heavens, the great Men Ouoranios, the mighty power of the immortal god."[98]

---

91 Compare the ascription to Zeus (Petzl 1994 §10); Dionysos (Nollé 1990); Serapis (*IGR* 1,5 1354bc; *SB* 1.381); the double Nemesis (Petzl 1994, §7); the Mother (of Men, *SEG* 53.1344 cf. *SEG* 4.647).

92 Michel and Zasoff 2001, §27 (Μέγα τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ Σάραπις with head of Serapis, "Great is the name of Serapis"); §542 (Μέγα τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ μόν(ου) θεοῦ no image of god, "Great is the name of the only god"). Le Blant 1896, §§202–206 (Serapis); §207 Μέγας θεὸς Ἀσκληπίος "Great is the god Asklepios"; §§209–210 Μεγάλη ἡ Τύχη τῶν θεῶν σωτῆρων / τῆς Νεμέσεως "Great is Tyche / Nemesis among the saviour gods". Some gems squeeze as much narrative into their text as is found on some testimonies on stone; see Michel and Zasoff 2001, §497. The relationship between public epigraphical display and (semi-?) private, inscribed jewelry (cf. amulets) has yet to be explored.

93 Wankel and Engelmann 1979–1984 / 7.1, 3100 (Μέγα τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ θεοῦ); cf. Wankel and Engelmann 1979–1984 / 7.1, 1247B; *SEG* 14.680, 15.793, 29.731(14).

94 Le Blant 1896, §201 (Μέγα τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ θεοῦ ἁγίου "Great is the name of the holy god").

95 Le Blant 1896, 77 (Μέγα τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ μόνου κυρίου θεοῦ). The use of κύριος is common in reference to deities (see, for example, Petzl 1994, §123). One unpublished inscription from Apollo Lairbenos refers to "Lord Larmenos".

96 The ascription of "great" to Michael lived on in Christian literature and texts. See Jolivet-Lévy 2012, 420; Gabelić 2009. However, generally, the acclamation of great power was directed to the Trinity (Jalabert and Mouterde 1955, 1457).

97 Bonnet 16.7 = ch 11.6, relying on Gen 21:22, 32 and especially Josh 5:14^{LXX}—ἐγὼ ἀρχιστράτηγος δυνάμεως κυρίου. Michael is not expressly named in these verses; this is a development in the tradition.

98 *TAM* 5.1 75: εἷς θεὸς ἐν οὐρανοῖς, μέγας Μὴν Οὐράνιος, μεγάλη δύναμις τοῦ ἀθανάτου θεοῦ; ("There is one god in the heavens, great Men Ouranios; great is the power of the immortal god").

2.7 *Allegiance*

A number of stories in stone speak of the expulsion of doubts over the god's power, the truthfulness of the accounts already presented at the attended sanctuary, and the requirements placed upon the one approaching. Sometimes skepticism is met by punishment, as a preparatory phase leading to the healing, especially if there has been willful disobedience of the terms of the god's revelation, or some breach of ethical requirements deemed to be within the god's purview.[99] Sometimes, the ignorance or lack of trust is itself part of the journey leading to healing.[100] Commitment can be indicated by the simple execution of the instructions given or by some further action, whether ritualistic or commemorative.[101] Both are present in the existing story of St Michael, though one expression of the ritual enactment—baptism for the entire household—is clearly Christian.[102] The actual phrase "glorifying God"[103] can be claimed as singularly Christian,[104] though the glory of a god *per se* is not.[105] Certainly the attendant departure[106] mirrors a formulaic element in inscriptions at Epidauros.[107]

2.8 *Thank-Offering*

A dedication in response to a healing is common.[108] What is striking about the Michael story is that the dedication of the "shelter"[109] is made not to the "true

---

99 LiDonnici 1995, *Stele A*, ll.54–68; *Stele B*, ll.7–9, 95–101; *Stele C*, ll.21–29; *SEG* 33.1013 (from Sattai, 3rd century CE).

100 LiDonnici 1995, *Stele A*, ll.22–33 (in this story, a man with paralyzed fingers is left with the name Ἄπιστος as a memory [punishment?] of his unbelief *after* his healing), 33–41 (a silver pig dedicated in memory of a woman's ignorance: ὑπόμναμα τᾶς ἀμαθίας), *Stele B*, ll.38–45, 87–95. Compare *Stele A*, ll.72–79, 79–89 where witnesses are the skeptical ones.

101 LiDonnici 1995, *Stele B*, ll.69–82; *Stele C*, ll.95–100.

102 Bonnet 4.16–17 = ch 3.4.

103 δοξάζων τὸν θεόν: Bonnet 5.2–3 = ch 3.5.

104 Lk 5:25, 17:15, 18:43; cf. the witnesses in Mk 2:12. The phrase occurs repeatedly in Byzantine writings, though the fuller snippet with ἀνεχώρησεν ("he departed") occurs only in the *Vita S. Benedicti Zachariae* 7.106.

105 *TAM* 2.1 174Db.1; *IGR* 1,5 1331.

106 ἀνεχώρησεν: Bonnet 5.2 = ch 3.5.

107 [ὑγιὴς] ἐξῆλθε / ἀπῆλθε "he/she departed well": LiDonnici 1995, *Stele A* ll.33, 41,71, 78; *Stele C* l.3, 32 etc. ἀναχωρέω "I depart" is never used in the New Testament in a healing context (cf. *Stele A*, l.117 of a simple transfer of location). Departures adopt a variety of words, including ἐξέρχομαι (Mk 1:45), ἀπέρχομαι (Mk 5:20), ὑπάγω (Mk 5:34 with ὑγιής; 7:29).

108 LiDonnici 1995, *Stele A* ll.1–9, 48–54; *Stele D* ll.5–9. Of course, dedications in response to direct instructions in dreams occur (for example, *IG* 11.4 1299 ll.47–65 [the Delian Sarapis aretalogy]. This is not the case here).

109 εὐκτήριον: Bonnet 4.17–5.1–2 = ch 3.5.

Christian God" as might have been expected from the opening of the child's cry: "God is truly of the Christians."[110] A parallel from the region of the Aezanitis underscores the issue. A father erects a pillar in a thank-offering to God and the archangel for the healing of his daughter.[111] But in *Michael of Chonai*, the dedication is made εἰς ὄνομα Μιχαήλ "to the name of Michael"[112] seemingly in explicit fidelity to the call, μὰ τὸ ὄνομά μου "Mark my name" earlier in the chapter. Elsewhere, an angel may, similarly, receive a thank-offering without reference to a god.[113] The express anathema of Canon 35 of the Council of Laodicea was directed against those ἀγγέλους ὀνομάζειν "naming angels", twice dubbed as "idolatry" (εἰδωλολατρεία). Even though this offence has been read, rightly, as meaning the worship of angels (cf. Col 2:18), the occurrence of the word in the two texts, one popular, one conciliar, of neighbouring churches is striking.[114] The use of such pejoratives about religious practice was far from confined to Colossae. Cyril Mango notes the accusation of Severus of Antioch, early in the 6th century, that the archangels Michael and Gabriel were being painted with colours and emblems in the manner of pagan representations rather than Christian.[115]

The limited examination that can be given here to each element demonstrates that critical components of the narrative of the healing-foundation story of St Michael are completely at home in a non-Christian environment. The emphasis on the name, oath, acclamation and offering carry little, if any, Christian veneer. One might readily imagine the story inscribed on the wall of a sacred building or on a pillar at the site:

> A man (from Laodicea?) with a daughter who was dumb from birth came to the healing spring in obedience to a dream of an eagle-winged divine being. He was unimpressed with the accounts of healing at the site, but when the waters were fed into her mouth, she cried out, 'Great is god

110 ὁ θεὸς τῶν χριστιανῶν ἀληθῶς: Bonnet 4.15 = ch 3.4.

111 *MAMA* IX.551 (Levick et al. 1988, 168 presume the name of the unidentified archangel to be Michael).

112 Bonnet 4.17–5.1 = ch 3.5.

113 *IStrat* 1.1119, 1120.

114 A narrowing of the meaning of the word to the invention of names for an increasing number of angels enabled the later Byzantine church to retain the letter, if not the spirit, of canon 35; see Charlemagne, *Capitularia Admonitio Generalis* 16 (c. 789 CE) (Boretius 1883, 55).

115 Mango 1984, 40–43.

> [or Zeus];[116] great is the power of his angel.'[117] The father confessed his ignorance and dedicated this building in thanksgiving for the healing of his daughter.

Nothing in this rendition of the story that I have constructed out of the *Michael of Chonai* story is distinct from its pagan environment. Something close to this I consider likely to have been a dedicatory inscription at the site.

3 Christianising the Dream Foundation Narrative

But the narrative of the Laodicean and his daughter is no longer phrased exactly in these terms. Adjustments and extensions have been made to the story in the effort to pass off the foundational narrative as a Christian authorisation of the site, leaving the healing renown of the sacred spring untouched against the wishes of the Laodicean ecclesiastical establishment. The dream or vision now concurs with the Septuagint rendition of the dreams of Jacob (Gen 46:2) and of Daniel "in a vision of the night".[118] This phrase is not found outside Judeo-Christian circles.[119] The God in the story is now the God of the Christians. The Nicene distillation of Father, Son and Holy Spirit now stamps the nature of that God,[120] with an accompanying, winged being identified as Michael the archistrategos.[121] The vision of the archangel's visitation comes on

116 I have identified Zeus (Bronton?) elsewhere as the patron god of Colossae. The archangel Michael displays many features redolent of Zeus (Cadwallader 2012, *passim*). Michael seems to have been capable of absorbing a number of different gods in different centres; see Mango 1984.

117 The connection of the angel(s) with the god is evident from a number of inscriptions: Zeus (*IStrat* 1.1117, 1118; 2.1307); Apollo (Wiegand 1958, 523; *SEG* 41.1185: ἀνγέλοι); Men (Petzl 1994, §§3, 38); cf. the "Most High God" (*SEG* 31.1080). What is important to note (see below) is that apart from the *kephalaion*, no description of Michael as angel or archangel occurs in *Michael of Chonai*.

118 ἐν ὁράματι τῆς νυκτός (Bonnet 4.2 = ch 3.2). Dan 2:19Th, 4:13Th, 7:13$^{OG, Th}$, 7:15^{OG} Dan 2:19Th, 4:13Th, 7:13$^{OG, Th}$, 7:15^{OG}.

119 So stereotypical had the phrase become in Christian usage from the 2nd century (Hermas *Vis.* 3.10.6 [Lake 1976, 52–53]; Justin M. *Dial.* 31.3 [Marcovich 1997, 119]) that it intruded into the (Christian) transmission of the LXX, being added unnecessarily to the text of Gen 15:1. See Wevers 1993, 202. Even Julian II reflects his Christian training when he adopts the phrase (*Contr. Gal.* 356D [Wright 1923, 424]).

120 Bonnet 4.9–12 = ch 3.3–4; Bonnet 8.10–11 = ch 5.1; Bonnet 18.13–14 = ch 12.4.

121 The very labeling of Michael as archistrategos may reflect the scriptural designation (Josh 5:14). To my knowledge, this practice is confined to the Judeo-Christian tradition.

the Christian's regular holy day, "on the first day of the week".[122] The Laodicean and his household are baptised,[123] and the entire narrative of the re-foundation of the sacred healing site is scored with a reminder of the role of the apostles.[124]

4 Strengthening the Christian Authorisation

The reference to the apostles at the beginning of chapter 3 functions as a summary bridge following what now appears as the opening two chapters of the story. At a surface level, these chapters fulfil the usual quest for apostolic authority for Christian churches and sites.[125] But there is a particular edge to the story, given the backdrop of resistance to the Synod of Laodicea that provided the catalyst for the gathering and shaping of materials into a vivid defence of the hagiasma. The apostles, John and Philip,[126] directly point to Michael as the benefactor behind the hagiasma.[127] Significantly, this prophecy, realized after the departure of the pair, comes from the same powerful practice as that which drove the viperous idolatry from Hierapolis, that is, they offer up prayer (ποιήσαντες εὐχήν).[128] No dream or vision is given to the apostles, unlike the initially godless Laodicean. Prayer is given a grounding in severe ascetic practice (the "angelic ascesis")[129] later in the story—to be demonstrated by Archippos the custodian of the hagiasma. Here it is locked into the apostolic revelation of the truth of the triune God.[130] The visionary encounter with the archistrategos by the godless Laodicean now appears as a beneficent condescension designed to convert the man and his household from paganism to the orthodox faith.[131]

---

122 μιᾷ δὲ τῶν ἡμερῶν: Bonnet 4.2 = ch 3.4. The same phrase occurs in Eustratius, *V. Eutych.* 1.581 (Laga 1992, 21).

123 Bonnet 4.16–17 = ch 3.4.

124 Bonnet 3.8 = ch 3.1.

125 So reads the opening of the story: ἐξαρχῆς ἐκηρύχθη ὑπὸ τῶν ἁγίων ἀποστόλων Φιλίππου καὶ Ἰωάννου τοῦ θεολόγου ("from the beginning proclaimed by the holy apostles, Philip and John the Theologian"; Bonnet 1.7–8 = ch 1.1). And see Bonnet 1890, XVIII.

126 In the Simeon Metaphrastes version of the story, the problem of Philip's involvement is overcome by admitting his martyrdom and attributing the prophetic announcement to John alone (Bonnet 22.1–6).

127 Bonnet 3.3–5 = ch 2.1.

128 Bonnet 3.2 = ch 2.1; cf. 2.14 = 1.3.

129 Bonnet 7.11, 8.7 = ch 4.6, 5.1.

130 This orthodoxy is to be measured particularly by the repetition of the three-fold name (Bonnet 4.9–10, 11–12; 8.10–11; 18.13–14, 17 = ch 3.3, 4; 5.1, 12.4). However, elsewhere in the story, orthodoxy is defined largely by ascetic practice (Bonnet 7.10 = ch 4.6).

131 For a thorough sociolinguistic analysis of the texts of three ancient Christian Acts, see Snyder 2014.

In the macro-dynamics of inter-city conflict, Hierapolis and the unnamed Colossae/Chonai[132] become the model to follow—not Laodicea.

Hierapolis, like Laodicea, gains two notices in the overall narrative. It is initially a city overrun with snakes associated with three manifestations of a poisonous female god: Artemis, the Great Mother and Echidna. Later, the cleansed city provides the ten year old custodian, Archippos, who, similar to the dedications at the shrine of Apollo Lairbenos,[133] will be the slave (δοῦλος) of the hagiasma, serving for seventy years.[134] The first Hierapolitan connection does not name the city as Opheorymos ("snake street"), as we find in *Acts of Philip* 15.2, 42, but the expansive description of the presence of serpents leaves no doubt.[135]

However, there are distinct features in *Michael of Chonai*. Not only is there a triad of goddesses, all embroiled in draconish designs,[136] but Philip does not effortlessly dispense with their poisonous entourage.[137] Rather the John of the *Acts of Philip* who is given the task (with Mariamne) of being an encouragement to Philip,[138] now journeys with his full title, "John the Theologian",[139]

---

132 Although the name Chonai is not present in the text, there is a clear pun on its meaning ("funnels") at the conclusion of the story (Bonnet 19.5–6 = ch 12.5). The various tituloi in manuscripts explicitly name Chonai and/or Colossae.

133 Akıncı Öztürk and Tanrıver 2008, §§1, 13 (δοῦλος, though now to be understood as slave of Apollo, perhaps more akin to a paramone in civic life); §14 (ἱερός). The meaning to be attached to the terminology related to assignment of children or slaves to the gods is complex, but held to be of sacred importance (Petzl 1994, §107). See, generally, Ricl 2001.

134 Bonnet 5.7–8, 10 = ch 4.1–2.

135 This therefore is an early testimony to the identification of the city of snakes as Hierapolis, rather than a separate city as is sometimes proposed. See Bovon and Matthews 2012, 26.

136 Only *APh* 1.1 (Bovon 1999, 4) mentions Artemis and this in a sweep of gods related by a distraught old woman just outside of Galilee. Neither Cybele nor the Great Mother is mentioned either. The focus appears to be Echidna in Hierapolis (*APh* 8.4, 15.7 [Bovon 1999, 245, 339]), conjoined with the pseudo-title of mother of the serpents: she-dragon.

137 The thorny issue of the identity of Philip need only be mentioned briefly here—as apostle (Matt 10:3 *et al*) or evangelist (Acts 6:5, 21:8 *et al*). Suffice to acknowledge with Christopher Matthews that the Acts of Philip itself, in its collection of disparate traditions possibly associated with each of the named Philips, has effectively forged a single person (Matthews 2002, 170–171). Whatever confusion of the two might be sheeted home to Papias of Hierapolis (*apud* Eusebius *HE* 3.39.9 [Ehrman 2003, 97–100]) and Polycrates of Ephesos (*apud* Eusebius *HE* 3.31.3; 5.24.2 [PG 20, 280–281, 493–496]), once the collection titled the *Acts of Philip* (Bovon 1999; Bovon and Matthews 2012) was formed, the unity was sealed and the confusion shelved.

138 *APh* 8.3 (Bovon 1999, 243); cf. mentions in 3.2–3, 8; 8:1, 2 (Bovon 1999, 79–81, 237, 239–241). Philip looks for John in the course of his martyrdom (15.21–23 [Bovon 1999, 375–379]).

139 The epithet 'Theologian' occurs in some *titloi* to the *Acts of John* but is not found in the text itself, nor in the *Acts of Philip*. Athanasius is often sourced as the earliest testimony but the references are probably pseudonymous. More certain is Gregory of Nyssa's

from the success of battles at Ephesos to assist Philip in his struggles.[140] No Bartholomew or Mariamne accompany Philip as in the *Acts of Philip*. The apostolic pair is alone responsible for ridding the city of the amalgam of the goddess' venomous presence. This they do through prayer rather than teaching.[141] Only in the aftermath of this wresting of Hierapolis for Christian control is the announcement made that the mighty taxiarch and archistrategos was about to unleash a series of wonders. But this is done from a place (not a city) given the evocative name of Chairotopa, not Hierapolis.[142] The apostles then depart, travelling on to their many unspecified adventures elsewhere, "teaching in other cities",[143] but, significantly, with no mention of the sinister Laodicea.[144] Only after they depart does a measure of fulfillment of the prophecy begin—however, it is not with the appearance of Michael the taxiarch but rather with the effusion of healing waters.[145] A few lines later, the apostles long gone, it will be described simply as a "finding" (εὕρεσις),[146] one which both Greeks and Christians patronise. Such a discovery was sometimes given considerable

---

Homily on St Theodore (PG 46, 748.30); see Leemans 2003, 91. The references to John 'the Theologian' in fragments of Papias surviving in the fifth-century Philip of Side (Papias fr. 12.1, 2 [Ehrman 2003, 112–13]) are contributed by Philip; the almost identical passage in the eighth-century George Harmatolos lacks 'the Theologian'. See Davies and Allison 1997, 90 n. 39; MacDonald 2012, 23 n. 43; Shanks 2013, 215 n. 367. Although the possibility must be allowed that the ascription is a transmissional addition to the fluid text of Michael of Chonai, the manuscripts in this instance are stable in the reading. This would place *Michael of Chonai* (the popular version) as one of the earliest testimonies to the designation of "John the Theologian". The ease of the designation suggests that this is already an accepted epithet, not an invention.

140 Bonnet 1.8 = ch 1.1.

141 Bonnet 2.14 = ch 1.3 (ποιήσαντες εὐχήν; "having offered a prayer"); cf. *APh* 15.3–7 (Bovon 1999, 333–341). This is not completely absent from the opening of the Michael story (Bonnet 2.10, 13 = ch 1.3) but is simply noted without elaboration; prayer is the instrument. Prayer also occurs in the *Acts of Philip* especially as related to healing (*APh* 15.11 [Bovon 1999, 358]).

142 Bonnet 2.17 = ch 2.1.

143 ἐπὶ τὰς ἑτέρας πόλεις διδάσκοντες ("teaching in other cities"): Bonnet 3.5–6 = ch 2.2.

144 It seems clear from the *Acts of John* that Laodicea was one of the places visited by the apostle John (probably following the suite of seven cities mentioned in Revelation 2–3). However, the state of the extant text of the apocryphal Acts of John gives no more than a heading (at chapter 58) to indicate that Laodicea was visited. See Schäferdiek 1992, 192. Huttner 2013, 186–189 considers the farewell speech to have occurred before John's return to Ephesos, delivered in Laodicea, and builds a partial profile of the building of the Johannine expression of Christianity in Laodicea.

145 Bonnet 3.6–7 = ch 2.2.

146 Bonnet 3.10 = ch 3.1.

acclaim in the ancient world, with honour credited to the god(s)' beneficence.[147] But this finding is even more precious—the waters are a source of healing—and the euergetistic divine being is the archangel Michael.

The brief apostolic episode is traditionally considered as distilled from the *Acts of Philip* or at least the *Martyrion* section (*Acts of Philip* 15).[148] There is no question that traditions, similar to the collection we now have, resonate with the opening to the Michael of Chonai story, just as there are parallels to the encratite asceticism of the *Acts*.[149] But there are significant differences: the collation of a triad of goddesses, so that the Great Goddess (θεὰ μεγάλη) especially is named;[150] the slight diminishing of Philip's prowess; the partnering of Philip with John and the absence of Bartholomew and Mariamne; the naming of John as "the Theologian" rather than "beloved of God" (*Acts of Philip* 15.26); the accent on the efficacy of prayer. Critical for the purposes of the story as a whole is that Hierapolis is not the centre for cures, even though Philip and his band conduct healings. Rather, the focus is on a hagiasma at a "place of favour". And, finally, the marginal references to Michael, the archangel / chief angel / my angel, as tour guide of hell's torments[151] now shift to a preoccupation with Michael the taxiarch and archistrategos in his defence of the sacred site.[152]

The next course of inquiry then is to seek to explain not only the presence of Hierapolis in the story but the specifics related to the inclusion of the two apostles. The clue lies in the Synod of Laodicea and in the cyclonic impact of the brief Julian interlude in imperial politics. According to the numismatic evidence, Cybele had continued to be a significant presence in the devotional life of Hierapolis into the 2nd century.[153] There is no need to see her as surpassed by Apollo.[154] Both gods (especially Helios-Apollo) were key to Julian's renovation

147 *IGLR* 171 = *SEG* 59.795 (honouring Hera); *SEG* 59.796 (honouring Poseidon Kyanochaites). Both these inscriptions come from Tropaeum Traiani (in Moesia Inferior, now Adamklisi, modern Romania) and are dated to the early 4th century CE.

148 Bouvier and Amsler 2003, 395; Huttner 2013, 372. Bonnet 1890, XVIII.

149 On the Encratite emphases of the *Acts of Philip*; see Schäferdiek 1992, 154; Slater 1999, 281–306; Amsler 1999, 469–520.

150 Bonnet 2.8 = ch 1.2. I understand this reference especially to indicate the "Great Mother", that is, Cybele. See Thomas 2004.

151 *APh* 1.8, 11, 13; 15.31 (Bovon 1999, 19–21, 25–27, 31–33, 394–397).

152 Taxiarch (Bonnet 15.6 = ch 11.3); archistrategos (Bonnet 1.8; 3.2; 4.10, 13, 16; 5.1; 6.13; 8.12; 11.11–12; 13.6, 13, 17; 14.17; 15.3, 10, 16; 16.5, 7, 15; 17.5, 10, 12, 15; 18.5, 14; 19.4 = ch 1.1; 2.1; 3.3, 4, 5; 4.4; 5.1; 7.4; 9.1, 9.2; 10.1; 11.2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7; 12. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5); taxiarch and archistrategos (Bonnet 3.3–4; 4.3; 16.6–7; 17.15 = ch 2.1; 3.3; 11.6; 12.3). There are no references to Michael the archangel / chief angel / my angel in the story apart from the added *kephalaion*.

153 *RPC* 3.2345, 2352; 4.2003, 2075.

154 *Pace* Amsler 1999, 535–540; Şimşek 2009, 674.

of pagan worship. In particular, Julian not only committed his literary ability to restoring her profile but also sought to re-invigorate sacred sites and attendant priesthoods throughout Asia. He even made patronage of the Great Mother a mark of loyalty to himself.[155] It is precisely the accent on female god(s) that is present in the opening to the Michael of Chonai story and in other denigrations of Julian's program in the aftermath of his death.[156] Julian was dubbed the "Idolian",[157] and it is idolatry (εἰδωλολατρεία) that has been hurled between Laodicea and angel devotees in the battle between canon and popular story.[158] Whatever shadowy presence might be found for Cybele in the Philip cycle, she is clearly on display in *Michael of Chonai*, and Julian is the culprit.[159] Greatness is wrested from the female deity to be showered on the archistrategos of God.

The Synod of Laodicea had already tacitly recognised how entrenched the veneration of martyrs had become in the church, even to the point where those dubbed "heretics" had attractive candidates. The degree of institutionalisation is indicated by funerary architecture that had gained pilgrim devotion in established cultic activity (Canon 9)[160] and a developed formal commemoration, presumably within church liturgies (Canon 51).[161] In *Michael of Chonai*, the choice of John and Philip as the apostolic authority for the foundation of the hagiasma has the further narrative back-story that both were martyrs. They were tied in tradition to Ephesos and Hierapolis. By contrast, Laodicea could only claim Sagaris and Artemon as its own martyrs, neither of whom had the status of apostles (even if Philip of Hierapolis was a constructed blend of two

155 Julian *Ep*. 22 (431D–432A [Wright 1923, 72]).

156 Such as in the satire on gods begetting, in a sermon on Theodore the Recruit by Gregory of Nyssa, demonstrated to be part of the deprecation of Julian; see Leemans 2003, 82–90.

157 Gregory of Nazianzus, *Or.* 4.77 (Bernardi 1983, 198).

158 The word occurs twice in Canon 35 of the Synod of Laodicea and is charged against the opponents from Laodicea whose evil intent is directed towards the destruction of the hagiasma, even including, at first, the father of the mute who is cured (Bonnet 3.15; 9.9–10 = ch 3.2; 5.4).

159 For expansion on the post-Julian setting for both Synod and popular story, see Cadwallader 2013.

160 Canon 9 reads: Περὶ τοῦ μὴ συγχωρεῖν εἰς τὰ κοιμητήρια, ἢ εἰς τὰ λεγόμενα μαρτύρια πάντων τῶν αἱρετικῶν ἀπιέναι τοὺς τῆς ἐκκλησίας, εὐχῆς ἢ θεραπείας ἕνεκα· … ("The members of the Church are not allowed to meet in the cemeteries, nor attend the so-called martyries of any of the heretics, for prayer or service …"). (Mansi 1759, 566).

161 Canon 51 reads: Ὅτι οὐ δεῖ ἐν τῇ Τεσσαρακοστῇ μαρτύρων γενέθλια ἐπιτελεῖν, ἀλλὰ τῶν ἁγίων μαρτύρων μνήμας ποιεῖν ἐν τοῖς Σαββάτοις καὶ ταῖς Κυριακαῖς. ("The nativities of Martyrs are not to be celebrated in Lent, but commemorations of the holy Martyrs are to be made on the Sabbaths and Lord's days"). (Mansi 1759, 571).

figures in the New Testament witness).[162] Laodicea had gained an unfavourable mention in the Johannine Book of Revelation; in *Michael of Chonai* there is no respite for the city. Ulrich Huttner has recognised in the various hagiographies stemming from Hierapolis and Laodicea the Christian version of that ancient trait of Greek poleis—agonistic competition for recognition and advancement.[163] Indeed, that such agonism could morph into antagonism in a specifically religious context is witnessed in an expiatory inscription from Kolyda in Lydia (3rd century CE) that refers to an attack upon a sanctuary during a festival.[164] Laodicea and Hierapolis had long been the leading cities of the Lycus Valley and had been grouped together in the Roman consciousness, but Roman government perspectives did not necessarily translate to actual cohesion at the local level; indeed, imperial decisions might have exacerbated intercity rivalry for resources, whether economic or status. *Michael of Chonai* taps directly into this rivalry especially in the immediate post-Julian period when cities and churches were scrambling to re-negotiate their positions amidst the new imperial and ecclesial realities.[165] The story constructs an opposition in the reader's mind between a purged city renowned for its apostolic munificence and an unrepentant city replete with diabolical idolatry and evil intent. By privileging Philip and calling in the aid of John in Hierapolitan alliance,[166] *Michael of Chonai* channels a pre-existing conflict and draws that energy into its own dispute.

The second story of the foundation of the hagiasma is placed first—narrative demands have displaced historical development. It becomes a hermeneutical lens (driving out idolatry by apostolic authority) for what then follows, so that, before we read / hear the story of the Laodicean father of the mute child, we are already inclined to understand the episode as quarantined from

162 Philip is listed as one of the twelve apostles in Matt 10:3 and parallels (including Acts 1:13) and more extensively in John's Gospel (Jn 1:43–8, 6:5–7, 12:21–22, 14:8–9). Most mentions of Philip in the Acts of the Apostle are to one of the seven appointed deacons, the one with four prophesying daughters (Acts 6:5, 21:8–9).

163 Huttner 2013, 190–195.

164 Hermann and Malay 2007, 110–3 §84. For a collection of instances of violent attacks during religious festivals, see Chaniotis 2006.

165 This is the argument of Cadwallader 2013.

166 Hierapolis is known to have struck or renewed alliances at least eleven times with Ephesos in the pre-Constantinian settlement (from the time of Marcus Aurelius to that of Gallienus). See Franke and Nollé 1997, 67–79. Laodicea similarly (at least six times) sought to gain from a display of *concordia* with pre-eminent Ephesos: Franke and Nollé 1997, 111–116. By contrast Hierapolis only entered into a homonoia relationship with Laodicea during the time of Hadrian, possibly as an indication of loyalty in the days when there was still some dispute over Hadrian's succession: Franke and Nollé 1997, 80–81.

pagan origins.[167] Whatever fissures remain in the attempts to christianise the primary foundation story are thereby glossed over, because the apostolic rendering has already occurred. Prayer, the effective mechanism in the war against evil and of prophecy, now grounds the vision of the night that launched the movement of the Laodicean pagan to the sacred spring and the dedication that followed the healing of his daughter. The series of epiphanies that follow in the story may expose the problem of the girl's proclamation of Michael's greatness, but any doubts as to where loyalty lies will finally be laid to rest with (Zeus-like) Michael's statement of allegiance to God and an exposition of the minuscule significance of his power compared to the ineffable Other.[168]

5 Conclusion

The story of *Michael of Chonai* has shown itself to be a model of how a sacred site of the Greco-Roman world became transformed into a pilgrim centre having a Christian origin. But as valuable as the resulting story may be as a narrative of Christian devotion, enough survives in the story to indicate the dream-foundation of the distant past, as well as the shape that could be given to the story in the context of ecclesial and political conflicts of times later than either the pagan or Christian beginnings. What began as a dream authorisation for a sacred site, or at least for buildings that emphasised its establishment as a pilgrim focus, gained a series of Christian glosses, especially when faced with a full-scale conciliar attack. Not only were Trinitarian formulae used to define the god and his angel of the previous dispensation, but the dream was subjected to the power of apostolic prayer to confer greater sanctified authority to the hagiasma.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

Aelius Aristides (1981) Ed. C. A. Behr, *P. Aelius Aristides: The Complete Works Volume II. Orations XVII–LIII* (Leiden).

Barth, M. and J. Stauber (eds) (1993) *Inschriften Mysia und Troas* (Munich).

167 A similar literary structure occurs in the Delian inscription where a hymn of praise in honour of Sarapis prefaces the actual account of Sarapis' victory over opponents. The reader/hearer is charged with exaltation before the conflict begins. See Hanges 2012, 148–151.

168 Bonnet 16.8–14 = ch 11.6.

Blinkenberg, C. and Kinch, K. F. (1941) *Lindos: Fouilles et recherches 1902–1914, II: Inscriptions*, 2 vols (Berlin).

Blümel, W. (1992) *Die Inschriften von Knidos*, Inschriften griechischer Stadte aus Kleinasien 41 (Bonn).

Bonnet, M. (1890) *Narratio de miraculo a Michaele archangelo Chonis patrato* (Paris).

Boretius, A. (ed.) (1883) *Capitularia regum francorum*, Monumenta Germaniae Historica (Hanover, repr. 1960).

Bovon, F., Bouvier, B. and Amsler, F. (1999) *Acta Philippi: Textus, vol. I Textus, vol. II Commentarius*, Corpus christianorum apocryphorum 11–12 (Turnhout).

Bovon, F. and Matthews, C. R. (2012) *The Acts of Philip: A New Translation* (Waco, Tex.).

Buckler, W. H., Calder, W. M. and Guthrie, W. K. C. (1933) *MAMA IV: Monuments and Documents from Eastern Asia and Western Galatia* (Manchester).

Bury, R. G. (1926) *Plato: Laws, Books 7–12*, LCL 192 (Cambridge, MA).

Cagnat, R. et al. (1911–1927) *Inscriptiones graecae ad res romanas pertinentes*. 3 vols (Paris; repr. Chicago, 1975).

Delehaye, H. (1912) 'Saints de Thrace et de Mésie', *Analecta Bollandiana* 31, 161–300.

Diogenes of Oinanda (1993) Ed. M. F. Smith, *Diogenes of Oinoanda. The Epicurean Inscription* (Naples).

Ehrman, B. D. (2003) *The Apostolic Fathers, Vol. II*, LCL 25 (Cambridge, MA).

Eustratius (1992) Ed. C. Laga, *Eustratii Presbyteri vita Eutychii Patriarchae Constantinopolitani* (Turnhout).

Fränkel, M. (1902) *Inscriptiones graecae Aeginae, Pityonesi, Cecryphaliae, Argolidis, Corpus inscriptionum graecarum Peloponnesi et insularum vicinarum 1* (Berlin).

Gattier, P.-L. (ed) (1986) *Inscriptions grecques et latines de la Syrie*, XXI. *Inscriptions de la Jordanie*, 2: *Région centrale* (*Amman, Hesban, Madaba, Main, Dhiban*) (Paris).

Gregory of Nazianzus (1983) Ed. J. Bernardi, *Discours 4–5. Contre Julien* (Paris).

Gulick, C. B. (1929) *Athenaeus: The Deipnosophists, Books VI–VII*, LCL 224 (Cambridge, MA).

Gulick, C. B. (1930) *Athenaeus: The Deipnosophists, Books VIII–X*, LCL 235 (Cambridge, MA).

Hansen, P. A. (1989) *Carmina epigraphica graeca. saeculi IV a. Chr. n. II. Texte und Kommentare 15* 2 vols (Berlin).

Head, B. V. (1906) *Catalogue of the Greek Coins of Phrygia* (London).

Herrmann, P. (1989) *Tituli Asiae Minoris 5/2: Regio septentrionalis ad Occidentum Vergens schedis ab Iosepho Keil elaboratis usus* (Vienna).

Herrmann, P. (2007) *Tituli Asiae Minoris 5/3: Tituli Lydiae V Linguis Graeca et Latina Conscripti* (Vienna).

Herrmann, P. and Malay, H. (2007) *New Documents from Lydia* (Vienna).

Inscriptiones Graecae, vols 1–14, http://epigraphy.packhum.org/biblio#b708.

Jalabert, L. and Mouterde, R. (1955) *Inscriptions grecques et latines de la Syrie, vol. 4. Laodicée. Apamène* (Paris).

Joannou, P.-P. (ed.) (1962) *Discipline générale antique* (*IIe–IXe s.*), I.2, *Les canons des synodes particuliers* (*IVe–IXe s.*), ser. 1 fasc. 9 (Rome-Grottaferrata).

Johnson, L. (2009) *Worship in the Early Church: An Anthology of Historical Sources*, 4 vols (Collegeville, MN).

Kalinka, E. (1920) *Tituli Asiae Minoris II/1: Tituli Lyciae linguis Graeca et Latina conscripti: Pars Lyciae occidentalis cum Xantho oppido* (Vienna).

Körte, A. (1900) 'Kleinasiatische Studien VI', *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts Athenische Abtheilung* 25, 398–444.

Lake, K. (1976) *Hermas, The Shepherd, The Apostolic Fathers* II. *Text and translation*, LCL (Cambridge, MA).

Levick, B. et al. (1988) *MAMA IX. Monuments from the Aezanitis recorded by C. W. M. Cox, A. Cameron, and J. Cullen* (Manchester).

LGPN online, Lexicon of Greek Personal Names, http://www.lgpn.ox.ac.uk/online/index.html.

LiDonnici, L. R. (1995) *The Epidaurian Miracle Inscriptions* (Atlanta).

Malalas (1986) Trans. E. Jeffreys, M. Jeffreys, and R. Scott, *The Chronicle of John Malalas: A Translation*, ByzA 4 (Melbourne).

Mansi, G. D. (1759) *Sacrorum Conciliorum Nova et Amplissima Collectio ... Tomus Secundus* (Florence).

Marcovich, M. (1997) *Dialogus cum Tryphone*, PTS 47 (Berlin).

Mihailov, G. (1958–1997) *Inscriptiones graecae in Bulgaria repertae*, 5 vols (Sofia).

Moretti, L. (1968–1990) *Inscriptiones graecae urbis Romae.* 4 vols in 5 parts (Rome).

Murray, A. T. and Wyatt, W. F. (1999) *Homer: Iliad, Books 1–12*, LCL 170 (Cambridge, MA).

Paton, W. R. (1917) *The Greek Anthology, Volume III*, LCL 84 (Cambridge, MA).

Petzl, G. (1994) *Die Beichtinschriften Westkleinasiens* (Bonn).

Poljakov, F. B. (ed.) (1989) *Die Inschriften von Tralleis und Nysa* (Bonn).

Popescu, E. (1976) *Inscripţiile greceşti şi latine din sec. IV–XIII descoperite în România* (Bucharest).

Ritti, T. (1985) *Fonti Letterarie ed Epigraphiche* (Rome).

Şahin, C. (ed.) (1982) *Die Inschriften von Stratonikeia* (Bonn).

SEG (1923–) Ed. J. E. Hondius, Vols 1–11 (Leiden 1923–1954); ed. A. G. Woodhead, Vols 12–25 (Leiden 1955–1971); eds H. W. Pleket and R. S. Stroud, Vols 26–41; (Amsterdam 1979–1994); eds H. W. Pleket, R. S. Stroud and J. H. M. Strubbe, Vols 42–44 (Amsterdam 1995–1997); eds H. W. Pleket, R. S. Stroud, A. Chaniotis and J. H. M. Strubbe, Vols 45–49 (Amsterdam 1998–2002); eds A. Chaniotis, R. S. Stroud and J. H. M. Strubbe, Vols 50– (Amsterdam 2003–).

Shackleton Bailey, D. R. (2006) *Quintilian: The Lesser Declamations, Vol. I*, LCL 500 (Cambridge, MA).

SNG Sammlung von Aulock (1957–1968) Ed. G. Kleine. 18 vols, Sylloge Nummorum Graecorum Deutschland 1 (Berlin).

Wankel, H. and Engelmann, H. (1979–1984) *Die Inschriften von Ephesos*. 8 vols (Bonn).
Wiegand, T. (1958) *Didyma: Die Inschriften von Albert Rehm, Zweiter Teil* (Berlin).
Wright, W. C. (1923) *The Works of the Emperor Julian, Volume III* (LCL 157; Cambridge, MA).

Secondary Sources

Adak, M., Akyürek Şahin, N. E., Güneş, M. Y. (2008) 'Neue Inschriften im Museum von Bolu (Bithynion/Klaudiupolis)', *Gephyra* 5, 73–120.
Akıncı Öztürk, E. and Tanrıver, C. (2008) 'New Katagraphai and Dedications from the Sanctuary of Apollon Lairbenos', *Epigraphica Anatolica* 41, 91–111.
Akıncı Öztürk, E. and Tanrıver, C. (2009) 'Some New Finds from the Sanctuary of Apollon Lairbenos', *Epigraphica Anatolica* 42, 87–97.
Akıncı Öztürk, E. and Tanrıver, C. (2010) 'New Inscriptions from the Sanctuary of Apollon Lairbenos', *Epigraphica Anatolica* 43, 43–49.
Amsler, F. (1999) *Acta Philippi: Commentarius* (Turnhout).
Arnold, J. C. (2013) *The Footprints of Michael the Archangel* (New York).
Belayche, N. (2007) 'Rites et "croyances" dans l'épigraphie religieuse de l'Anatolie', in J. Scheid (ed) *Rites et croyances dans les religions du monde romaine* (Geneva), 73–103.
Bouvier, B. and F. Amsler, F. (2003) 'Le Miracle de l'archange Michel à Chonai: Introduction, traduction et notes', in D. H. Warren, F. Bovon, A. G. Brock, and D. W. Pao (eds) *Early Christian Voices: In Texts, Traditions and Symbols* (Leiden), 395–407.
Brixhe, C. (1987) 'La langue comme critère d'acculturation: l'exemple du Grec d'un district phrygien', *Hethitica* 8, 45–80.
Cadwallader, A. H. (2009) 'The Inversion of Slavery: The ascetic and the archistrategos at Chonai', in G. D. Dunn, D. Luckensmeyer, L. Cross (eds) *Prayer & Spirituality in the Early Church V: Poverty and Riches* (Strathfield, NSW), 215–236.
Cadwallader, A. H. (2011a) 'A Stratigraphy of an Ancient City through its Key Story: the Archistrategos of Chonai', in A. H. Cadwallader and M. Trainor (eds) *Colossae in Space and Time: Linking to an Ancient City* (Göttingen), 282–298.
Cadwallader, A. H. (2011b) 'The Story of the Archistrategos, St Michael of Chonai', in A. H. Cadwallader and M. Trainor (eds) *Colossae in Space and Time: Linking to an Ancient City* (Göttingen), 323–330.
Cadwallader, A. H. (2012) 'St Michael of Chonai and the Tenacity of Paganism', in D. Kim and S. Hathaway (eds) *Intercultural Transmission throughout the Medieval Mediterranean: 100–1600 CE* (London and New York), 37–59.
Cadwallader, A. H. (2013) 'Inter-city Conflict in the Story of St Michael of Chonai', in W. Mayer and B. Neil (eds) *Religious Conflict from Early Christianity to the Rise of Islam* (Berlin), 109–128.

Cadwallader, A. H. (2015) *Fragments of Colossae* (Adelaide).

Cadwallader, A. H. (2018) 'Epiphanies and Religious Conflict: The Contests over the *hagiasma* of Chonai', in C. de Wet and W. Mayer (eds) *Reconceiving Religious Conflict: New Views from the Formative Centuries of Christianity* (London), 110–135.

Chaniotis, A. (2006) 'Rituals between Norms and Emotions: Rituals as Shared Experience and Memory', in E. Stavrianopolou (ed) *Ritual and Communication in the Graeco-Roman World* (Liège).

Clay, D. (1989) 'A Lost Epicurean Community', *GBRS* 30, 313–335.

Davies, W. D. and Allison, D. C. (1997) *The Gospel according to Saint Matthew Volume III* (Edinburgh).

Franke, P. R. and Nollé, M. K. (1997) *Die Homonoia-Münzen kleinasiens und der thrakischen Randgebiete: I Katalog* (Saarbrücken).

Gabelić, S. (2009) 'From the Painted Programme of Saint John (Ayvali Kilise) Cappadocia', *Zograf* 33, 33–41.

Godley, A. D. (1922) *Herodotus: The Persian Wars, Books V–VII*, LCL 119 (Cambridge, MA).

Hanges, J. C. (2012) *Paul, Founder of Churches: A Study in Light of the Evidence for the Role of 'Founder-Figures' in the Hellenistic-Roman Period* (Tübingen).

Harris, W. V. (2009) *Dreams and Experience in Classical Antiquity* (Cambridge, MA and London).

Hefele, C.-J. von (1876) *A History of the Councils of the Church*, trans. W. R. Clark and H. N. Oxenham (Edinburgh).

Horsley, G. H. R. and Luxford, J. M. (2016) 'Pagan Angels in Roman Asia Minor: Revisiting the Epigraphic Evidence', *Anatolian Studies* 66, 141–183.

Huttner, U. (2013), *Early Christianity in the Lycus Valley* (Leiden).

Jolivet-Lévy, C. (2012) *Études Cappadociennes* (London).

Le Blant, E. (1896) *750 Inscriptions de pierres gravées inédites ou peu connues* (Paris).

Leemans, J. (2003) 'Gregory of Nyssa', in J. Leemans, W. Mayer, P. Allen and B. Dehanschutter (eds) *'Let Us Die that We May Live': Greek Homilies on Christian Martyrs from Asia Minor, Palestine and Syria* (*c. AD 350–AD 450*) (London), 78–110.

MacDonald, D. (2012) *Two Shipwrecked Gospels: The Logoi of Jesus and Papias' Exposition of Logia about the Lord* (Atlanta).

Mango, C. (1984) 'St. Michael and Attis', *Deltion* 12, 39–62.

Matthews, C. (2002) *Philip, Apostle and Evangelist: Configurations of a Tradition* (Leiden).

Michel, S. and Zazoff, P. and H. (2001) *Die Magischen Gemmen in Britischen Museum* (London).

Miller, K. M. (1985) 'Apollo Lairbenos', *Numen* 32.1, 46–70.

Morgan, T. (2015) *Roman Faith and Christian Faith*: Pistis *and* Fides *in the Early Roman Empire and Early Churches* (Oxford).

Moyer, I. S. (2011) *Egypt and the Limits of Hellenism* (Cambridge).

Nollé, J. (1990) 'Epigraphische und numismatische Notizen 9: Zu der neuen Stele aus dem Museum von Aydin', *Epigraphica Anatolica* 15, 121–125.

Nollé, J. (2007) *Kleinasiatische Losorakel. Astragal—und Alphabetchresmologien der hochkaiserzeitlichen Orakelrenaissance* (Munich).

Parker, R. (2000) 'Theophoric Names and the History of Greek Religion', in E. Matthews and S. Hornblower (eds) *Greek Personal Names: Their Value as Evidence* (Oxford), 53–79.

Parker, R. (2004) 'Dedications, Introduction', *Thesaurus Cultus et Rituum Antiquorum* 1, 269–286.

Paz de Hoz, M. (1999) 'Angelos y Theion en exvotos anatolios', in F. R. Adrados et al. (eds) *Τῆς φιλίης τάδε δῶρα. Miscelánea léxica en memoria de Conchita Serrano* (Madrid), 103–109.

Petridou, G. (2015) *Divine Epiphany in Greek Literature and Culture* (Oxford).

Petsalis-Diomidis, A. (2006) 'Sacred Writing, Sacred Reading: The Function of Aelius Aristides' Self-presentation as Author in the Sacred Tales', in J. Mossman and B. McGing (eds) *The Limits of Ancient Biography* (Swansea), 193–211.

Ramsay, W. M. (1893) *The Church in the Roman Empire before AD 170* (London).

Ramsay, W. M. (1897) *The Cities and Bishoprics of Phrygia* (London).

Renberg, C. H. (2010) 'Dream-Narratives and Unnarrated Dreams in Greek and Latin Dedicatory Inscriptions', in E. Scioli and C. Walde (eds) Sub imagine somni: *Nighttime Phenomena in Greco-Roman culture* (Pisa), 33–62.

Ricl, M. (2001) 'Donations of Slaves and Freeborn Children to Deities in Roman Macedonia and Phrygia. A Reconsideration', *Tyche* 16, 127–160.

Ritti, T., Şimşek, C., and Yıldız, H. (2000) 'Dediche e καταγραφαί dal santuario frigio di Apollo Lairbenos', *Epigraphica Anatolica* 32, 1–88.

Robert, L. (1962) *Villes d'Asie Mineure* (2nd edn, de Boccard).

Roman Provincial Coinage online, rpc.ashmus.ox.ac.uk/coins/.

Schäferdiek, K. (1992) 'The Acts of John', in W. Schneemelcher (ed) *New Testament Apocrypha Volume Two*, trans. R. M. Wilson (Cambridge).

Shanks, M. A. (2013) *Papias and the New Testament* (Eugene, OR).

Şimşek, C. (2009) 'Regional Cults in the Lycos Valley and its Neighbourhood', in H. Sağlamtimur, A. Çilingiroğlu and E. Abay (eds) *A Life Dedicated to Urartu on the Shores of the Upper Sea: Studies in Honor of Altan Çilingiroğlu* (Istanbul), 673–690.

Slater, R. N. (1999) 'An Inquiry into the Relationship between Community and Text: The Apocryphal *Acts of Philip* 1 and the Encratites of Asia Minor', in F. Bovon, A. G. Brock and C. R. Matthews (eds) *The Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles* (Cambridge, MA), 281–306.

Snyder, J. A. (2014) *Language and Identity in Ancient Narratives: The Relationship between Speech Patterns and Social Context in the Acts of the Apostles, Acts of John and Acts of Philip* (Tübingen).

Straten, F. T. van (1976) 'Daikrates' Dream: A Votive Relief from Kos and Some Other *kat'onar* Dedications', *Bulletin Antieke Beschaving* 51, 1–38.

Thomas, C. (2004) 'The "Mountain Mother": the other Anatolian Goddess at Ephesos', in G. Labarre and J-M. Moret (eds) *Les Cultes locaux dans les mondes grec et romain* (Paris), 249–262.

Thonemann, P. (2011) *The Maeander Valley: A Historical Geography from Antiquity to Byzantium* (Cambridge).

Versnel, H. S. (2011) *Coping with the Gods: Wayward Readings in Greek Theology* (Leiden).

Veyne, P. (1986) 'Une évolution du paganisme gréco-romain: injustice et piété des dieux, leurs ordres ou "oracles"', *Latomus* 45, 259–283.

Wevers, J. (1993) *Notes on the Greek Text of Genesis* (Atlanta, GA).

CHAPTER 14

Dreaming Liturgically: Andrew of Crete's *Great Kanon* as a Mystical Vision

Andrew Mellas

> The days of our life pass swiftly, as a dream, as a flower. Why do we trouble ourselves in vain?
>
> ANDREW OF CRETE, *Great Kanon*

∴

Dreaming was a liminal experience for the Byzantines. By sealing the minutiae of everyday existence with a periodical foretaste of death, it underscored the evanescence and corruptibility of human life.[1] However, it also reflected the intermediate phase between death and resurrection where "death is more like dreaming than dying".[2] In this moment when the dreamer's body was dormant and the soul remained active, the images formed in the mind unveiled hopes and fears, or prefigured what was to come, but did so in a mysterious and opaque fashion. Although dreams represented a potential source of insight into the human person or a glimpse of divine things, they could also manifest the darker side of human passion or become the haunts of demons.

Dreams and visions in Byzantium—not unlike emotions—were historically, culturally and theologically situated phenomena.[3] Christian philosophy

1 Death was often described as falling asleep in liturgical hymns and prayers, and in patristic texts. See the analysis of Byzantine funeral rites and hymns in Marinis 2017, 85–106. I would like to thank Professor Georgia Frank, Professor Derek Krueger and Professor Mary Cunningham for their insightful comments on an earlier version of this paper. I am also grateful for the peer review process. As always, any shortcomings are my own.

2 John of Damascus, *On the Orthodox Faith*, 4.15 (Kotter 1973, 203). Quoted in Constas 2001, 91. In this passage, John of Damascus refers "the death of the saints" rather than the death of every human person.

3 Stroumsa 1999, 191. It is important to note the subtle differences between dreams, visions and ecstasy: "The *enhypnion* and *phantasma* were nonpredictive dreams: the former is caused by mental or physical distress or a preoccupation with daily concerns, while the latter is the distorted image that a dreamer perceives between the sleeping and waking state. Three types of

© KONINKLIJKE BRILL NV, LEIDEN, 2018 | DOI:10.1163/9789004375710_016

shaped the Byzantine understanding of these universals against the backdrop of Hellenism and classical thought.[4] They also tamed the open frontier between the human and the divine that dreams perpetuated in the centuries marked by Christ's apostles and early martyrs.[5] The scriptural portrayal of dreams and visions in the Acts of the Apostles as divine events was eventually met with ambivalence in the postapostolic and postbiblical era.[6] Patristic tradition and monastic literature often admonished the faithful against dwelling on misleading or diabolical dreams. However, the polymorphic nature of dreams, which could also be a locus of revelation and a prism for mystical experience, perpetuated a twilight of dreaming in Byzantium without eventide.

According to Athanasius of Alexandria, the act of dreaming became an inner movement where one could contemplate what was outside the self and traverse foreign lands.[7] Dreams could create a bridge between the soul and creation, and sleep could engender a vision of superior aspects of reality.[8] Similarly, the performance of the *Great Kanon* sought to take the faithful on a liturgically imagined journey.[9] Andrew of Crete's epic poem performed an ekphrastic vision, drawing on the mystagogy of the Byzantine liturgy to stage an eschatological drama of salvation.[10]

---

dreams were significant: the *oneiros*, a symbolic dream that usually required interpretation; the *horama*, or prophetic vision; and the *chrematismos*, a dream wherein God or some divine emissary proffers information or advice." Oberhelman 1991, 661.

4 On dreams, see Le Goff 1985, 171–218; Miller 1994, 39–49; Neil, Costache, and Wagner (forthcoming). On emotions, see Knuuttila 2004, 111–176.

5 Brown 1978, 65.

6 Acts 2:17, 9:1–18, 10:10–22, 11:4–18, 22:17–21. See also Pelikan 2005, 184–187.

7 *Contra Gentes* 31.38–44 (Thomson 1971, 87). Quoted in Miller 1986, 154.

8 Athanasius of Alexandria, *On Sickness and Health* (Diekamp 1938, 7; Brakke 1995, 310): "… the sleep (ὕπνος) of the saints is endowed with the vision (θεωρίαν ἔχει) of superior [aspects of reality] and whilst their body rests still (ἡσυχάζοντος) on the ground the mind (νοῦς) goes through to outer things, and flies up from the earth to the heavens." Quoted in Costache 2016, 20.

9 For an introduction to the *Great Kanon*, see Krueger 2013. Unearthing the original text of the *Great Kanon* that Andrew of Crete wrote in eighth-century Byzantium is a difficult task. There is currently no critical edition of the text based on the relevant manuscript tradition. The manuscript tradition begins with Sinai Graecus 734–735 (fols. 69r–83v), a tenth-century *Lenten Triodion* of Constantinopolitan provenance, which represents the earliest witness to Andrew's composition and its performance during the fifth week of Lent. This manuscript is linked to two other manuscripts of the *Lenten Triodion* from the 11th century: Vaticanus Graecus 771 (fol. 18v) and Grottaferrata Δβ I (fols. 7v–16r). I have only examined these three manuscripts.

10 For an introduction to the life and work of Andrew of Crete (660–740), see Cunningham 1998, 267–294. On medieval dream/mystical vision texts as ekphrasis, see Barbetti 2011.

This paper explores how the cosmic events dramatised in the poetic universe of Andrew's composition evoked compunction, which was embodied in liturgical performance. It argues that hymnography interwove biblical figures and events from the past and the future in liturgical time and space as a kind of dream that was shared by the faithful.[11] This kind of dreaming was far removed from the fantastical dreams that were often derided in patristic literature; it was more akin to a wakeful dream. Liturgical worship was not a disembodied experience. A more accurate description of this mystical experience is a vision, which could "occur in sleep or in waking hours and could be experienced by an individual or a group".[12] Although it is conceivable that this experience was a descent into dreaming, it is not the ambition of this paper to show that the liturgical performance of the *Great Kanon* enacted such an oneiric event. Nevertheless, the patristic conception of dreams and dream visions as something that could transcend the natural order sheds light on why liturgical singing represented for the Byzantines a participation in the cosmic liturgy of the divine kingdom.

While the experiences of dreaming and liturgical worship are not entirely analogous, the potential of the former to participate in the divine helps us to understand the mystical significance of the latter. The singing of the *Great Kanon* activated liturgical memory, which did not interpret the biblical events of salvation and its protagonists through the prism of history, but as realities that became present as part of the mystery of worship. Not unlike the description of dreaming in Plato's *Timaeus* and *Republic*, the ritual performance of hymnography presented images as resembling that which they signified.[13] After briefly surveying the patristic conception of dreaming in Byzantium, this paper will reimagine the performance of the *Great Kanon* as a mystical vision and a sacramental act that aroused compunction, betokened the eschaton and transfigured the emotions of the singer.[14]

---

11 On liturgical time, see Krueger 2015, 118–124. On the sacred space of Hagia Sophia, see Pentcheva 2010, 45–56.

12 Irmscher, Kazhdan, and Cutler 1991, 2179.

13 Plato, *Timaeus*, 52a–c; *Republic*, 476c, 572a–b (Burnet 1968). See also Sallis 1999, 120–122; Pentcheva 2014, 122.

14 The theme of mystical vision in the Dionysian corpus and Maximus the Confessor's *On Ecclesiastical Mystagogy* will be discussed below. On liturgy and hymnography as a holy drama that enacts the events of salvation history in which the faithful participate, see Archimandrite Vasileios 1984, 57–79. On literature as the source material for exploring the history of emotions, see McNamer 2007, 247–248.

1 The Patristic Conception of Dreaming in Byzantium

It is beyond the scope of this paper to review critically the patristic conception of dreaming in Byzantium. However, as a way of framing what will follow and as a point of departure for interpreting the *Great Kanon* as a mystical vision, a brief exploration of this issue will be fruitful. While it would also be illuminating to examine the dreambooks of Byzantium and how they portray the provenance of dreams and the relationship between dreaming and feeling, or how the Apocalypse of John is at the heart of the Byzantine liturgy despite its absence from the lectionary, these must remain desiderata at this stage.[15] In the meantime this paper suggests that, according to the Byzantine patristic tradition, dreams were generally regarded as a natural occurrence, albeit a dubious one. Despite illustrating the corruptibility of human nature and manifesting fleshly desire, dreams could also represent a contemplation of divine things.

Although he favoured watchfulness and vigilance over sleeping, Athanasius of Alexandria acknowledged that dreaming could be a vehicle of divine revelation. In his letter *On Sickness and Health*, after citing the visions that Elisha and Daniel experienced whilst asleep, and briefly alluding to the five senses of the body and soul, Athanasius described a divine sense that is awakened by compunction:

> Ἔστι τις μετὰ ταύτας καὶ ἑτέρα ἕκτη αἴσθησις, καθ' ἣν τῶν ἀναφῶν ἐφαπτόμεθα οἱ ἐφάπτεσθαι δυνάμενοι, περὶ ἧς εἶπεν Σολομῶν. καὶ θείαν αἴσθησιν εὑρήσεις, ἥτις καὶ ἐν κατανύξει καρδίας πολλάκις πέφυκεν γίνεσθαι.[16]
>
> There is, after these, also another sixth sense, with which we who are able to touch partake of the untouchable, about which Solomon said, "You will discover a divine sense perception", and which often comes to pass in compunction of heart.[17]

Athanasius suggested a threefold framework within which these kinds of dreams could occur: a vigilant mind, a spiritual sensorium and the emotion of compunction.[18] Although it did not represent a systematic theory of dreaming,

15 Nevertheless, see Mavroudi 2002; Oberhelman 2008; Neil 2016, 44–64; Shoemaker 2016, 315–316.

16 Chapter 8. Retrieved from the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* (http://stephanus.tlg.uci.edu) on 25 January 2017.

17 The English translation is my own.

18 On the biblical understanding of compunction and its transformation into a Christian concept, see Chryssavgis 1985, 131–136; Harl 1986, 3–21.

Athanasius' letter differentiated between dreams that reflected the irrationality of human nature and dreams that could transcend the natural boundaries of sleep.[19]

Gregory of Nyssa echoed this idea of oneiric ecstasy in his comments on the image of wakeful sleep in the Song of Songs. The Bride who sleeps but whose heart is awake receives the manifestation of God in a divine vigil. Her sleep "is a stranger and alien to the ordinary course of nature" (ξένος δέ τις οὗτος ὁ ὕπνος ἐστὶ καὶ τῆς φυσικῆς συνηθείας ἀλλότριος) that represents "a new and paradoxical mixture" (καινὴ καὶ παράδοξος μίξις) of sleeping and wakefulness.[20] As with other oxymorons that the Nyssen deployed—"sober drunkenness" and "luminous darkness"—the idea of wakeful sleep wherein the soul can "taste the divine gladness"[21] bespeaks a "transformed sense of human identity".[22] Not unlike Athanasius, Gregory believed there are dreams that participate in a "diviner manifestation" and dreams that are "fantastic nonsense" but, whereas few are deemed worthy of the former, for the most part people experience the latter.[23]

Evagrius of Pontus may not have known Gregory of Nyssa as well as he knew Basil the Great and Gregory the Theologian, but his views on how emotions can shape the nature of dreams reflected those of the Nyssen.[24] While blessed emotions governed by impassible passion can engender dreams and visions in which we encounter the saints, depraved emotions can darken the vision of the soul and hypnotise the vigilant mind.[25] Not unlike Plato, for whom dreams illustrated the virtue of the dreamer, for Evagrius it was the health of soul and its movements that determined the dreams of the dreamer. As Christ declared in his sermon on the mount, it was the pure in heart who would see God—an injunction that was not lost on Evagrius.[26]

Evagrius' eight categories of demonic dreaming in the *Praktikos* are also a typical example of how Byzantine monastic literature portrayed dreams as the abode of diabolical figures.[27] Although the warfare demons waged against

19 Costache 2016, 21.

20 Greg. Nys., Homily 10 (Norris 2012, 326, 327).

21 Norris 2012, 329.

22 Miller 1994, 241.

23 *De hominis opificio*, 13.5, 13.11 (PG 44, 168B–C, 172B).

24 An intriguing counterview has been put forward in Ramelli 2015, 159–224. Ramelli suggests Evagrius could have been the Nyssen's disciple.

25 See the analysis of Evagrius' *Thoughts* in Corrigan 2009, 62. On passion that becomes "blameless and impassible" when it is "directed toward things incorporeal"; see Homily 1 (Norris 2012, 25).

26 Several Evagrian texts consider Matthew 5:8. See Corrigan 2009, 66.

27 Stroumsa 1999, 199.

monks was most remarkably chronicled in the *Life of St Antony*, it did not explore the realm of dreams. Centuries later, the *Ladder of Divine Ascent* devoted a small section to the dreams of novices:

> [...] after we have gone into exile for the love of God, the demons try to shake us with dreams [οἱ δαίμονες δι' ἐνυπνίων θορυβεῖν δοκιμάσουσιν ἡμᾶς]. They show us our relatives grieving, near death, poverty-stricken or imprisoned because of us.[28]

Unlike the visitations of holy people that could be brought about by blessed emotions, feelings of separation and homesickness or other passions rendered one susceptible to the deceit of demons. Indeed, according to John Climacus, treachery was their modus operandi:

> Devils often take on the appearance of angels of light or martyrs and they appear to us in sleep [καθ' ὕπνους] and talk to us, so that they can push us into unholy joy and conceit when we awaken.[29]

John concluded that the only dreams to be trusted are those that foretell torment and judgment, but even these dreams may be demonic if they lead to feelings of despair.

In being so enigmatic, dreams are reminiscent of the allegorical approach to biblical interpretation that characterised the hermeneutics of Philo and Origen. The oneiric image illustrates the obscurity and elusiveness of Scripture, which conceals its meaning with textual images of truth.[30] This paradoxical tension is reflected in Gregory the Theologian's stance on dreams:

> Σὺν σοὶ δὲ κοίτη εὐσεβεῖς
> Ἐννοίας ἐταζέτω,
> Μηδέ τι τῶν ῥυπαρῶν
> Ἡμέρας νὺξ ἐλέγχῃ,
> Μηδὲ παίγνια νυκτὸς
> Ἐνύπνια θροείτω·
>
> Let sleep now be the forum
> For holy thoughts, I pray you,

28 Step 3, 'On Exile' in John Climacus 1982, 89 (PG 88, 669CD).
29 Ibid.
30 Miller 1994, 91–95.

That night may not uncover
The hidden filth of daylight,
Nor dreams proclaim in vision
The shameful tales of darkness.[31]

Although he was a dreamer who would trust "the deceitful dreams of night that offer us joy for a while" more than he trusted in human prosperity,[32] dreaming was usually a negative metaphor for Gregory or a dangerous space of nocturnal activity.

In contrast to the patristic ambivalence towards personal dreams, the poetry and music of the *Great Kanon* invited the Byzantines to enter the dreamery of the liturgical world and experience a mystical vision of the divine. Indeed, the liturgical context of hymnography was mystagogy, which was crucial to the experience of the Church. A century before Andrew of Crete composed his epic poem, Maximus the Confessor's *On Ecclesiastical Mystagogy* suggested that the "entrance of the holy mysteries [τῆς εἰσόδου τῶν ἁγίων μυστηρίων]" during the liturgy leads the faithful "to the vision of spiritual things [πρὸς τὴν τῶν νοητῶν ἐποψίαν]".[33] This mystagogy was not simply the acquisition of supernatural knowledge but a participation in a mystery that transformed the faithful. Through the "spiritual delight of the divine songs [πνευματικὴν τῶν θείων ᾀσμάτων τερπνότητα]", the faithful became part of this mystagogy and were "moved toward the unfading and blessed love of God [πρὸς μὲν τὸν ἀκήρατον τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ μακάριον ἀνακινοῦσαν ἔρωτα]".[34]

Psalmody and hymnody were portrayed as a sacramental act that mirrored the heavenly choir of angels and shaped the passions[35] of the singer's soul, "creating prudent pleasure for salvation".[36] Hymns presented the faithful as

31 *Evening Hymn*, PG 37, 513; Daley 2006, 168.

32 Gregory of Nazianzus, *Or.* 14 *On the Love of the Poor*, 19, PG 35, 881. See Daley 2006, 85. On the notion of Gregory as a dreamer, see Miller 1994, 232–236.

33 Chapter 13, Berthold 1985, 200; Maximus the Confessor 2011, 42. The catechumens, however, and those unworthy of the divine vision of the mysteries are dismissed.

34 *On Ecclesiastical Mystagogy* 11 (Boudignon 2011, 40; trans. Berthold 1985, 199).

35 In the Byzantine lexicon, the Greek word for emotion—πάθος—is often translated as "passion", but it does not suggest extreme emotions in the modern sense of the word. See Kazhdan and Cutler 1991, 691–692. Although I follow scholars such as Richard Sorabji (2002) and David Konstan (2006) in translating the Greek word πάθος as emotion, I acknowledge that the shift from passions to emotions in the 19th century psychologised and secularised the philosophical and theological dimensions of the former. See Dixon 2011, 298–312.

36 *Kontakion on the Consecration of Hagia Sophia* (24 December 562); Trypanis 1968, 146.

"chanting with the angel [ψάλλοντες μετ' ἀγγέλου] to the creator of angels,"[37] and the liturgy transformed emotions, placing them within an eschatological context.[38]

Indeed, eschatology was not simply a future occurrence but a present reality, commemorated in the Eucharist and experienced in the polytemporal vision of the liturgy.[39] The performance of the liturgy enacted the *eschaton*, collapsing past, present and future into liturgical time.[40] Although dreaming liturgically was not a disembodied experience or an unshared reality, the performance of the *Great Kanon* and its liturgical context are illuminated by the patristic concept of dreams that could transcend the natural boundaries of sleep. However, as indicated earlier, a mystical vision is a more precise characterisation of the liturgical participation in Andrew's *Great Kanon*. After all, it is in liturgical life that "propitious visions" (εὐμεναὶ ὁράσεις) are encountered and the faithful are guided "to the divine visions of the sacraments" (τὰς θείας τῶν τελετῶν ἐποψίας).[41]

2 Images and Compunction in the *Great Kanon*

The *Great Kanon* weaves an epic narrative of paradisal nostalgia, compunction and salvation, set against the backdrop of divine providence and amidst a litany of biblical characters who exemplify repentance. It is a poetic meditation on and vivid description of the "godly deeds" and "evil deeds" of scriptural figures.[42] In Byzantium, this ekphrastic vision sought to traverse space and time and turn listeners into spectators. It evoked a feeling of presence, inviting

37 Romanos the Melodist, *On the Three Children* (Grosdidier de Matons 1964, 396). The English translation is my own.

38 Maximus the Confessor *On Ecclesiastical Mystagogy* 24 (Boudignon 2011, 55–71; trans. Berthold 1985, 206–213).

39 Meyendorff 1983, 218–220; Taft 2006, 156–158.

40 The "proclamation of the Gospel" marks the "end of history" and all that follows takes place in "the age to come". See Louth 2004, 114.

41 Dionysius the Areopagite, *Epistle* 8.6 and *Ecclesiastical History* 6. Quoted in Gavrilyuk 2012, 94. On the notion of the church as theophany and the liturgical context of the mystical ascent in the Dionysian corpus, see Golitzin 1999, 180–186.

42 Ode 1, strophes 7–8: Sinai Graecus 734–735 (f. 69r–69v); *Τριώδιον Κατανυκτικόν*, 463. I have counted the stanza that follows each *heirmos* as the first strophe. Footnote references to the Greek text are limited to the manuscripts I have examined and the 1879 edition of the *Lenten Triodion* published in Rome (*Τριώδιον Κατανυκτικόν*). Although Vaticanus Graecus 771 is one of the earliest witnesses to the singing of the *Great Kanon* during the fifth week of Lent, it does not contain the text of Andrew's composition but simply the title of what is to be chanted, the author and mode of Byzantine music—plagal second—and

participation in the divine drama that unfolded and arousing the emotions of the faithful.[43] The hymn did not simply invoke the memory of the biblical narrative—it enacted the divine drama of salvation. The rhetorical and poetical deployment of *phantasia*[44] had emotive power that could excite, enthral and astonish.[45]

The performance of the *Great Kanon* as a verbal icon that enacted a rewritten Bible is all the more profound in the light of the Byzantine conflict over images.[46] So critical was the defence of icons for Byzantine theology that, according to John of Damascus, who was contemporary with Andrew of Crete, it would either uphold or break every link in the great chain of images that began with the Creator of all images and Christ as the "image of the invisible God".[47] This "cosmology of icons" linked Creator and creation "through a comprehensive schema of images" and enshrined icons within a "hierarchical metaphysical reality" that included humanity, Scripture and typological images—such as the burning bush or Melchizedek—which prefigured what was to come in the history of salvation.[48] Although icons were the sixth and final link in this great chain of images, they were explicitly linked to the first five classes of image in such a way that the iconoclasts' disavowal of icons was "tantamount to a rejection not only of one link but of the entire chain of images".[49]

Hymnography for Andrew of Crete was also part of this great chain of images.[50] The *Great Kanon* parades before the faithful scriptural images—biblical

---

a direction to "search for it in the beginning of the *Tropologion* (ζήτει εἰς τὴν ἀρχὴν τοῦ τροπολογίου)". See f. 118v.

43 On ekphrasis, imagination and emotions, see Webb 1997, 112–127.

44 According to Longinus, *phantasia* describes the situation in which the rhetorician sees what he is performing and presents the narrative with "vividness (ἐνάργεια)" bringing it "before the eyes of [the] audience". *On the Sublime*, chapter 15, 1–2 (Hamilton Fyfe 1995, 216–217).

45 Indeed, it lured them into a kind of ecstasy, where emotion could blur the boundaries between past and present, between self and other. However, Longinus makes a distinction between the effects of poetry and prose.

46 Pelikan 2011, 70. For an examination of the historical and cultural context of iconoclasm, see Brubaker and Haldon 2011. On the idea of hymnography as rewritten Bible, see Bucur 2007, 92–112.

47 Colossians 1:15. John of Damascus' examination of the six links in the great chain of images appears in his *Third Apologetic Oration on the Holy Icons* (PG 94, 1337–1344).

48 Pelikan 2011, 175–181.

49 Pelikan 2011, 182.

50 As Mary Cunningham has argued, Dionysius the Areopagite's ideas helped to shape Andrew of Crete's understanding of "the way in which divine truth may be apprehended, even if only dimly, by means of types, imprints or images that take the form of mental images or words. It is also worth noting that he sees this process as happening not only in the context of penitential prayer, ascetic exercise or rational enquiry, but above all through

exemplars and counter-ideals that are reflections of the soul.[51] Indeed, Andrew of Crete alludes to this phenomenon by describing David's composition of Psalm 50 as the creation of image:

> Δαυῒδ ποτὲ ἀνεστήλωσε, συγγραψάμενος ὡς ἐν εἰκόνι, ὕμνον, δι' οὗ τὴν πρᾶξιν ἐλέγχει, ἣν εἰργάσατο κραυγάζων· Ἐλέησόν με· σοὶ γὰρ μόνῳ ἐξήμαρτον, τῷ πάντων Θεῷ, αὐτὸς καθάρισόν με.[52]
>
> David once composed a hymn, setting forth, as in an image, the action he had done; and he condemned it, crying: "Have mercy upon me, for against you only have I sinned; God of all, cleanse me."[53]

The singer's soul, which can be a reflection of—or reflected in—the images appearing in Andrew of Crete's poetic universe, is ultimately presented as an image of God that has been discoloured and tainted by sin, yet which can be restored to its original beauty through tears of compunction.[54] On several occasions throughout the *Great Kanon*, Andrew of Crete entreats the faithful to visually experience the divine mystery: "See now, see that I am God: give ear, my soul, to the Lord as He cries to you" (Ἴδετε ἴδετε, ὅτι ἐγώ εἰμι Θεός, ἐνωτίζου ψυχή μου, τοῦ Κυρίου βοῶντος)[55]—and later in the same ode: "Know and see that I am God, searching out hearts" (Γνῶτε καὶ ἴδετε, ὅτι ἐγώ εἰμι Θεός, ὁ ἐρευνῶν καρδίας).[56] The desire for visual communion continues later in the hymn: "O Master and Lord, may my tears be to me as Siloam, that I also may wash clean the eyes of my soul and with my mind behold You, the light before the ages"

---

participation in the liturgical celebration of the Church. Deification, he implies, occurs in the lives of the Christian faithful when they join in the timeless but also commemorative celebration of the liturgy." See Cunningham 2014, 57.

51 Krueger 2014, 146–152.

52 This strophe, which is from the seventh ode of the *Great Kanon*, appears in two of the earliest manuscripts of the *Lenten Triodion*: Sinai Graecus 734–735 (f. 79v) and Grottaferrata Δβ I (f. 13v). It is also in the post-Byzantine examples of the received tradition, such as the 1879 *Τριώδιον Κατανυκτικόν*, 482.

53 The English translation is my own. However, I have consulted Ware and Mary 1978, 378–415; Sister Katherine and Sister Thekla 1980, 29–64.

54 This theme is particularly evident in the second ode of the *Great Kanon*. See also Frank 2006, 33–47.

55 Ode 2, "another hirmos", strophe 1. Sinai Graecus (f. 71v); Grottaferrata Δβ I (f. 8r); *Τριώδιον Κατανυκτικόν*, 467.

56 Sinai Graecus (f. 72r); Grottaferrata Δβ I (f. 8v); *Τριώδιον Κατανυκτικόν*, 468.

(Σιλωὰμ γενέσθω μοι τὰ δάκρυά μου, Δέσποτα Κύριε, ἵνα νίψωμαι κἀγώ, τὰς κόρας τῆς καρδίας, καὶ ἴδω σε νοερῶς, τὸ φῶς τὸ πρὸ αἰώνων).[57]

These images of various biblical figures could become more than objects of affective meditation for the faithful. While this presupposed the "divine sense perception" that Athanasius of Alexandria spoke of or what John Chrysostom called "the eyes of faith" (ὀφθαλμοὶ τῆς πίστεως),[58] Andrew's ekphrasis enacted a wakeful dream that could suspend the existential difference between the self and the other, between the Byzantine faithful and biblical figures of the past. Within the sacred space and sacred time where the hymn was performed, the faithful were invited to step outside their confines of time and materiality and enter the liturgical narrative that was unfolding before them. By the same token, the *Great Kanon* bade the inward gaze of the believers to explore their feelings, search for the image of God that defined them, and yearn for "the supernatural passion" of deification.[59] However, unlike modern psychology, introspection in medieval thought was "not about the self but about the universe"; it was "an inversion of the microcosm into the macrocosm".[60]

One of the dramatic devices that the *Great Kanon* employs to perform its ekphrastic vision is repetition.[61] Three aspects of Andrew's poem exhibit this characteristic: the thematic repetition of compunction and repentance in each ode; the invocation of familiar biblical exemplars who reinforce the penitential tone of the *kanon*; and the infrequent use of a refrain in some odes. Although this repetitive dimension of the *Great Kanon* may seem tedious to a modern audience, it is in fact typical of the memory culture of Byzantium, which aurally cultivated a visual narrative for the mind and persuaded the soul to "remain vigilant in the fight against oblivion".[62] Andrew's poem illustrates how the *kanon*—with its musical rhythm and choral nature—enacted and embodied the feeling of compunction within a meaningful practice, encouraging the faithful to participate in the performance of the hymn, enter its poetic and musical universe, and internalise the emotion and repentance it dramatised.[63]

In the same way that the biblical canticles on which *kanons* were usually modelled would call to mind the quintessential story of salvation, the biblical characters Andrew of Crete summoned traverse the Old and New Testaments.

---

57 Ode 5, strophe 21, Sinai Graecus (f. 76v); Grottaferrata Δβ I (f. 11v); *Τριῴδιον Κατανυκτικόν*, 477.

58 Frank 2001, 634.

59 Maximus the Confessor, *To Thalassius*, 22.6 (PG 90, 324B).

60 Barbetti 2011, 18.

61 I acknowledge Fr Damaskinos Xenophontos for pointing this out to me.

62 Papalexandrou 2010, 110.

63 Scheer 2012, 220.

These scriptural exemplars of repentance and wickedness were images and narratives that sought to arouse compunction in the soul:

> Μωσέως παρήγαγον, ψυχὴ τὴν κοσμογένεσιν, καὶ ἐξ ἐκείνου, πᾶσαν ἐνδιάθετον, γραφὴν ἱστοροῦσάν σοι, δικαίους καὶ ἀδίκους [...] Τῆς νέας παράγω σοι, Γραφῆς τὰ ὑποδείγματα, ἐνάγοντά σε, ψυχὴ πρὸς κατάνυξιν.[64]
>
> I have put before you, my soul, Moses' account of the creation of the world and all the recognised Scriptures that tell you the story of the righteous and the wicked [...] I bring you, O my soul, examples from the New Testament, to lead you to compunction.

This striking strophe suggests the hymnographer's ekphrastic strategy was to immerse the faithful in biblical narratives, taking them on a liturgically imagined journey through salvation history and conjuring a raft of scriptural exemplars as companions. Indeed, the Byzantines often met the saints in their dreams, as well as in liturgical rituals. Andrew begins his litany of exemplars with the first-created humans, Adam and Eve. But this scriptural story becomes the story of the faithful as they sing the *Great Kanon*. The liturgical performance of the text destabilises the 'I' of subjectivity. The fall and exile of Adam and Eve from Eden becomes for the faithful their own alienation from divine grace. Having "rivalled in transgression Adam the first-created human", the listener and singer of the *Great Kanon* ponders her/his own estrangement from the "everlasting kingdom" and is invited to feel the paradisal nostalgia and mortality that the "garments of skin" represent.[65] The nakedness of Adam and Eve, their loss of the ancestral robe of beauty fashioned by God and the garments of skin become images of the congregation's own fallenness and desire for prelapsarian bliss: "Now I have rent my first robe, which the Creator wove for me from the beginning, and thence I lie naked."[66] This destabilisation of subjectivity in the *Great Kanon* continues in the seven odes that follow the first ode, as the hymn presents a vision of Old Testament figures exemplifying virtue or iniquity to elicit compunction.

---

64 Ode 9, strophes 2, 4. Sinai Graecus 734–735 (f. 81v); Grottaferrata Δβ I (f. 15r); *Τριώδιον Κατανυκτικόν*, 488–489.

65 Ode 1, strophe 3. Sinai Graecus 734–735 (f. 69r); *Τριώδιον Κατανυκτικόν*, 463. On the significance of God clothing Adam and Eve in "garments of skin" (Genesis 3:21) after the fall, see Nellas 1997, 43–91.

66 Ode 2, strophe 8. Sinai Graecus 734–735 (f. 70v); Τριώδιον Κατανυκτικόν, 465: Διέρρηξα, νῦν τὴν στολήν μου τὴν πρώτην, ἣν ἐξυφάνατό μοι, ὁ Πλαστουργὸς ἐξ ἀρχῆς, καὶ ἔνθεν κεῖμαι γυμνός.

Whereas repentance is a radical change of mind, compunction incites repentance by kindling a desire for restoration.[67] While compunction may be a precondition for repentance, the inverse can also take place: "By deliberate choice, my soul, you have incurred the guilt of Manasseh, setting up the passions as idols and multiplying abominations. But with fervent heart emulate his repentance and acquire compunction."[68]

Compunction displays teleological dimensions insofar as it performs a restoration of humanity.[69] This theme is prominent in the second ode of the *Great Kanon*, where the image of God in which humankind was created is identified with a comely form of the human person, and passions represent the disfigurement of this beauty. However, in this mystical vision, tears of compunction can heal the deformity of the human person and clothe her/him with the prelapsarian raiment of Eden.[70]

From time to time, the loosely chronological sequence of Old Testament biblical exemplars in the first eight odes is interrupted. In the first ode, amidst the narratives of Adam and Eve, and Cain and Abel, Andrew of Crete invokes the scriptural character of the prodigal son as a universal figure of sinfulness, and yet a model of repentance.[71] The parable of the prodigal would have already been celebrated during one of the preparatory Sundays of Lent when the hymns prescribed for that day called on the faithful to identify with this scriptural exemplar of compunction.[72] Andrew of Crete once again entreats the faithful to feel what the prodigal felt when he became so alienated from divine grace in faraway lands that he was lost even to himself, content to be dining

67 Repentance emerges as a leitmotif of Scripture and late antique Christian discourse. However, repentance is a difficult concept to define. The *Patristic Greek Lexicon* devotes several pages to defining μετάνοια—Lampe 1961, 855–858. Unlike modern audiences, which have inherited "a somewhat distorted and incomplete view of repentance in late antiquity" as inextricably connected with ecclesiastical institutions of penitence, repentance's existential significance for Christianity went beyond penitential rites, embracing the totality of Christian life. See Torrance 2012, 9.

68 Ode 7, strophe 15. Sinai Graecus 734–735 (f. 79v), Grottaferrata Δβ I (f. 14r); Τριώδιον Κατανυκτικόν, 483: Τοῦ Μανασσῆ, ἐπεσώρευσας, τὰ ἐγκλήματα τῇ προαιρέσει, στήσασα ὡς βδελύγματα πάθη, καὶ πληθύνουσα ψυχή, προσωχθίσματα. Ἀλλ' αὐτοῦ τὴν μετάνοιαν, ζηλοῦσα θερμῶς, κτῆσαι κατάνυξιν.

69 I thank Fr Damaskinos Xenophontos for pointing this out to me.

70 "Κατέχρωσα, τῆς πρὶν εἰκόνος τὸ κάλλος, Σῶτερ τοῖς πάθεσιν, ἀλλ' ὡς ποτὲ τὴν δραχμήν, ἀναζητήσας εὑρέ" (I have discoloured with the passions the first beauty of the image, O Saviour. But seek me, as once you had sought the lost coin and find me). Ode 2, strophe 21. Sinai Graecus 734–735 (f. 71r), Grottaferrata Δβ I (f. 8r); *Τριώδιον Κατανυκτικόν*, 466.

71 See Ode 1, strophe 12. Sinai Graecus 734–735 (f. 69v); *Τριώδιον Κατανυκτικόν*, 464.

72 For these hymns on the prodigal son, see Sinai Graecus 734–735 (ff. 3v–5v).

with swine rather than his kith and kin. Yet, remembering the royal dignity of his home, compunction rekindled the flame of his relationship with God and "he came to himself".[73] This moment marks the prodigal's emergence from the abyss of alienation into a wakefulness that desires restoration. It becomes a call for the faithful singing the *Great Kanon* to take up the words of the prodigal and see in the liturgical performance their own return to their ancestral home and the bliss of Eden.

Andrew of Crete invited the faithful to journey through history with the righteous and the wicked and consider their own place in the divine drama of salvation. The hymn is more a collection of "small dream moments" than a linear narrative, more an intersubjective text than a mere translation of visuality.[74] It evokes a vision of human repentance against the backdrop of biblical stories and elicits a contemplation of God through the eyes of the soul.[75] The first-person narrative of the hymnographer could become the words of the Byzantine faithful who took up the song of the righteous who had gone before them: with "courage like Jacob", with the "tears of the harlot", "like the woman with the issue of blood", they could cry: "stretch out your hand to me as once you did to Peter".[76]

---

73 Luke 15:17.

74 Barbetti 2011, 21.

75 Although it is referring to the Byzantine liturgy and was written several centuries after the *Great Kanon*, the following excerpt from Nicholas Cabasilas' *Commentary on the Divine Liturgy* is pertinent: "That is why it was necessary that actions of this sort, capable of inspiring such feelings in us, should find a place in the ordering of the liturgy. It was necessary, not only that we should think about, but also that to some extent we should *see* the utter poverty of him who possesses all, the coming on earth of him who dwells everywhere, the shame of the most blessed God, the sufferings of the impassible; that we should see how much he was hated and how much he loved; how he, the Most High, humbled himself; what torments he endured, what he accomplished in order to prepare for us this holy table. Thus, in beholding the unutterable freshness of the work of salvation, amazed by the abundance of God's mercy, we are brought to venerate him who had such compassion for us, who saved us at so great a price: to entrust our souls to him, to dedicate our lives to him, to enkindle in our hearts the flame of his love." Nicholas Cabasilas 1977, 29.

76 Ode 4, strophe 9; Ode 2, strophe 5; Ode 8, strophe 16; Ode 2; strophe 4. Sinai Graecus 734–735 (ff. 74r, 70v, 81r, 70v). Grottaferrata Δβ I does not have the quoted strophes from the second ode—see ff. 10r and 14v for the other two references. *Τριώδιον Κατανυκτικόν*, 473, 466, 486, 465.

3 Dreaming and Feeling Liturgically in the *Great Kanon*

The sacred song of hymnography created an affective mysticism where human feelings became liturgical feelings in a "sacramental mimesis".[77] The *Great Kanon* unfolded as a kind of mystical vision where liturgical emotions could be perceived and felt. One precondition for this to occur was the nature of the ecclesial community that the liturgy was portrayed as engendering:

> [A]bsolutely no one at all is in himself separated from the community since everyone converges with all the rest [πάντων συμπεφυκότων ἀλλήλοις] and joins together with them by the one, simple and indivisible grace and power of faith.[78]

This "body of the faithful is one" and "is divided by neither time nor place".[79] The other precondition for this to occur was the Incarnation, which "taught [the flesh] to feel things beyond its nature" (τὰ ὑπὲρ φύσιν ἰδίαν διδασκομένη φρονεῖν) by uniting it to the divine in the person of Christ.[80] Patristic tradition attributed Christ's emotions not simply to his human nature but to the one incarnate Logos. And what the Logos assumed, he also healed and transformed.[81]

The performance of the *Great Kanon* was—in a sense—framed by the dream of death. It called to mind the liminal state between death and resurrection by evoking a sense of the Last Judgment. On the same day that Andrew of Crete's *Great Kanon* was sung—the Thursday of the fifth week of Lent—before the performance of the *orthros*, Romanos the Melodist's *On the Infernal Powers* was chanted during the *pannychis*.[82] Romanos' hymn begins with a cry of the singer to her/his soul that is provoked by the nearness of death:

> Ψυχή μου, ψυχή μου, ἀνάστα· τί καθεύδεις;
> Τὸ τέλος ἐγγίζει καὶ μέλλεις θορυβεῖσθαι·

77 Tkacz 2003, 276; Harvey 2001, 125.

78 *On Ecclesiastical Mystagogy* 1 (Boudignon 2011, 13; trans. Berthold 1985, 187).

79 John Chrysostom, *Homily on the apostolic saying that states: But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come* 6 (PG 56, 277). Quoted in Nellas 1997, 145.

80 Cyril of Alexandria, *Commentary on the Gospel According to John* 7, on John 11:33 (PG 74, 53A).

81 Pelikan 1974, 72–75.

82 *On the Infernal Powers* is a "compunctious *kontakion*" (κοντάκιον κατανυκτικόν) assigned to the Thursday of the fifth week of Great Lent. See Grodidier de Matons 1967, 242.

ἀνάνηψον οὖν, ἵνα φείσηταί σου Χριστὸς ὁ Θεός,
ὁ πανταχοῦ παρὼν καὶ τὰ πάντα πληρῶν.[83]

O my soul, my soul, wake up—why do you sleep?
The end draws near and you will be thrown into confusion;
come to your senses then, so that Christ God spares you,
He who is everywhere and filling all things.

The juxtaposition of condemnation and salvation plays on the tension between the present life and the life of the age to come. It enjoined an awakening and entrance into the liturgical narrative of salvation. The *Great Kanon* continued this theme on an epic scale, summoning a vast assembly of scriptural exemplars in its flight through the biblical account of God's people and the events of salvation. In underscoring the ephemeral nature of earthly life, Andrew compared mortality to a dream:

Ἐγγίζει ψυχὴ τὸ τέλος, ἐγγίζει καὶ οὐ φροντίζεις, οὐχ ἑτοιμάζῃ. Ὁ καιρὸς συντέμνει, διανάστηθι, ἐγγὺς ἐπὶ θύραις ὁ Κριτής ἐστιν, ὡς ὄναρ, ὡς ἄνθος ὁ χρόνος τοῦ βίου τρέχει, τί μάτην ταραττόμεθα;[84]

The end draws near, O soul, the end draws near, and you do not care, nor make ready. The time grows short, rise up: the Judge is at the door. The days of our life pass swiftly, as a dream, as a flower. Why do we trouble ourselves in vain?

By juxtaposing the fleeting nature of dreams with the ephemerality of life, the hymn portrays mortality and death as life's bedfellows. The eschaton was a constant companion in the liturgical life of the Byzantines, where the hour of judgment was always nearby. In the above strophe, the imminence of death and the prospect of judgment is a vision of the future made present that provoked compunction and a desire for repentance. The rational lines dividing and ordering the grand narrative of salvation, its biblical stories, its scriptural characters and even the eschaton become somewhat blurred in the dreamlike liturgical world of the *Great Kanon*. Similarly, amidst the affective mysticism of Byzantine liturgical hymns, the logical, historical and existential distinctions between the tears that the prodigal or the harlot wept are swept away as the faithful are called to feel their blessed emotions.

83 Prelude, Grosdidier de Matons 1967, 242. The translation is my own.
84 Ode 4, strophe 2. Sinai Graecus 734–735 (f. 73v); *Τριῴδιον Κατανυκτικόν*, 472.

4 Concluding Remarks

The liturgical performance of the *Great Kanon* invited the faithful to experience a mystical vision of the divine drama of salvation by interweaving biblical figures and events from the past and the future. It presented the hidden desires of these characters and bade the faithful to become part of the sacred drama unfolding before them. Although it is not analogous to dreaming, the Byzantine construction of liturgical experience is illuminated by an appreciation of the cultural and theological significance of dreams. Not unlike how dreams for Athanasius of Alexandria could form a bridge between the soul and the world, the performance of the *Great Kanon* traversed time and space as it guided the soul through scriptural landscapes. And as Anastasios of Sinai declared, "As many dreams as you will see producing in you compunction, and correction, and conversion, and fear of God, love only these".[85] But whereas dreaming was an experience where discursive thought was suspended, the liturgy was a controlled dream that deconstructed the binaries of rational and irrational, inner and outer, sensory and intelligible. The call of the *Great Kanon* to awaken was an entreaty to shake off delusion and enter the liturgically imagined narrative of salvation.

Sacred ritual opened a liminal space where personal contemplation and the collective song of the faithful dovetailed in the mystical body of Christ. Singing the *Great Kanon* became a sacramental act that mirrored and shaped the emotions of the singer's soul. As the *Great Kanon* came to inhabit the *Lenten Triodion* and the ritual of Lent, it embodied and enacted a mystical vision where liturgical emotions could be perceived and felt in humanity's encounter with the divine:

> The secrets of my heart have I confessed to You, my Judge. See my abasement, see my affliction, and attend to my judgment now; and in Your compassion have mercy upon me, O God of our fathers.[86]

Although the *Great Kanon* evokes the deep longing that binds the faithful to their Creator, Judge and Saviour in a personal relationship, it refracts this

85 *Questions and Answers* 72 in Richard and Munitiz 2006, 125. Ὅσα οὖν ἐνύπνια ὄψει ποιοῦντά σοι κατάνυξιν, καὶ διόρθωσιν, καὶ ἐπιστροφήν, καὶ φόβον Θεοῦ, ταῦτα μόνα ἀγάπησον. The English translation is my own.

86 Ode 7, strophe 2. Sinai Graecus 734–735 (f. 78v); Grottaferrata Δβ I (f. 13r); Τριώδιον Κατανυκτικόν, 482: Τὰ κρύφια τῆς καρδίας μου, ἐξηγόρευσά σοι τῷ Κριτῇ μου, ἴδε μου τὴν ταπείνωσιν, ἴδε καὶ τὴν θλίψιν μου, καὶ πρόσχες τῇ κρίσει μου νῦν, καὶ αὐτός με ἐλέησον ὡς εὔσπλαγχνος ὁ τῶν Πατέρων Θεός.

longing through an intricate prism of an eschatological communion where biblical figures come together, inviting the congregation to sing with the prodigal, the harlot, the thief, and to dream and feel liturgically.

Dreaming liturgically was a corporeal vision of the adventure of human freedom where the mystery of the human heart and the divine drama of salvation converged. The *Great Kanon* brought the faithful to the precipice of death and judgment to give them a glimpse of "a new heaven and a new earth" where God "wipe[s] away every tear from their eyes" in the bliss of a paradise lost and regained.[87] The exile from Eden, the incarnation, crucifixion and resurrection of Christ, and the actions of God's people came together in the panoramic vision of the *Great Kanon*, which the faithful could internalise. Not unlike Gregory of Nyssa's paradoxical mixture of sleeping and wakefulness that promises a taste of divine gladness, liturgical song envisioned a communion of saints and embodied a mystical harmony between humanity and creation "in the day without evening" (ἐν τῇ ἀνεσπέρῳ, ἡμέρᾳ) of the life of the age to come.[88]

Bibliography

Primary Sources

Anastasios of Sinai (2006) Eds M. Richard and J. A. Munitiz, *Anastasii Sinaite: Quaestiones et Responsiones*, CCSG 59 (Turnhout).

Andrew of Crete (1980) Trans. Sister Katherine and Sister Thekla, *St Andrew of Crete. The Great Kanon. The Life of St Mary of Egypt* (Whitby).

Athanasius of Alexandria (1971) Ed. and trans. R. W. Thomson, *Athanasius: Contra Gentes and De Incarnatione* (Oxford).

On Sickness and Health (1938) Ed. F. Diekamp, *Analecta Patristica, Orientalia Christiana Analecta* 117 (Rome), 5–8; (1995) Trans. D. Brakke, *Athanasius and the Politics of Asceticism* (Oxford), 310–313.

Berthold, G. C. (trans.) with J. Pelikan (intro.) (1985) *Maximus Confessor: Selected Writings*, The Classics of Western Spirituality (New York).

Cyril of Alexandria, *Commentary on the Gospel According to John 7*, PG 74, 9–104.

Gregory of Nazianzus, *Evening Hymn*, PG 37, 511–514.

87 Rev 21:1, 4. See also *On Ecclesiastical Mystagogy* 2: "For the whole of the spiritual world appears mystically imprinted on the whole sensible world in symbolic forms, for those who are capable of seeing this, and conversely the whole sensible world is spiritually explained in the mind in the principles which it contains." (Boudignon 2011, 16; trans. Berthold 1985, 189).

88 John of Damascus, *Kanon for the Sunday of Pascha*, Ode 9, strophe 3 (PG 96, 844B).

Gregory of Nyssa (2012) Trans. R. A. Norris, Jr., *Homilies on the Song of Songs* (Atlanta).
De hominis opificio, PG 44, 124–256.
John Climacus (1982) Trans. C. Luibheid and N. Russell, *The Ladder of Divine Ascent* (New York).
John of Damascus (1973) Ed. B. Kotter, *De fide orthodoxa* in *Die Schriften des Johannes von Damaskus* (Berlin and New York).
Kanon for the Sunday of Pascha, PG 96, 840–844.
Third Apologetic Oration on the Holy Icons, PG 94, 1317–1420.
Longinus (1995) Trans. W. Hamilton Fyfe, *On the Sublime*, in S. Halliwell, D. Russell and D. C. Innes (eds) *Aristotle, Poetics: Longinus, On the Sublime: Demetrius, On Style* (Cambridge), 143–306.
Maximus the Confessor (2011) Ed. C. Boudignon, *Maximi Confessoris Mystagogia*, CCSG 69 (Turnhout).
To Thalassius. PG 90, 244–785.
Nicholas Cabasilas (1977) Trans. J. M. Hussey and P. A. McNulty, *A Commentary on the Divine Liturgy* (London).
Plato (1968) *Republic.* Ed. J. Burnet, *Platonis Opera*, 327a–621d (Oxford).
Plato (1968) *Timaeus.* Ed. J. Burnet, *Platonis Opera*, 17a–92c (Oxford).
Romanos the Melodist (1964) Ed. J. Grosdidier de Matons, *Romanos le Mélode. Hymnes. Tome I: Ancien Testament* (Paris).
Romanos the Melodist (1967) Ed. J. Grosdidier de Matons, *Romanos le Mélode. Hymnes. Tome IV: Nouveau Testament* (Paris).
Triodion (1879) *Τριώδιον Κατανυκτικόν, περιέχον ἅπασαν τὴν ἀνήκουσαν αὐτῷ ἀκολουθίαν τῆς ἁγίας καὶ μεγάλης Τεσσαρακοστῆς* (Rome). Trans. K. Ware and Mother Mary (1978) *The Lenten Triodion* (Boston).

Manuscripts

MS Grottaferrata Δβ I (11th to 12th centuries)
MS Sinai Graecus 734–735 (10th century)
MS Vaticanus Graecus 771 (11th century)

Secondary Sources

Archimandrite Vasileios (1984) *Hymn of Entry: Liturgy and Life in the Orthodox Church*, trans. E. Briere (New York).
Barbetti, C. (2011) *Ekphrastic Medieval Visions: A New Discussion in Interarts Theory* (New York).
Brown, P. (1978) *The Making of Late Antiquity* (Cambridge).
Brubaker, L. and Haldon, J. (2011) *Byzantium in the Iconoclast Era, c. 680–850: A History* (Cambridge).

Bucur, B. G. (2007) 'Exegesis of Biblical Theophanies in Byzantine Hymnography: Rewritten Bible?', *Theological Studies* 68(1), 92–112.

Chryssavgis, J. (1985) 'Κατάνυξις: Compunction as the Context for the Theology of Tears in St. John Climacus', *Κληρονομία* 17(2), 131–136.

Constas, N. (2001) '"To Sleep, Perchance to Dream": The Middle State of Souls in Patristic and Byzantine Literature', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 55, 91–124.

Corrigan, K. (2009) *Evagrius and Gregory: Mind, Soul and Body in the 4th Century* (Farnham).

Costache, D. (2016) 'Stances on Sleep and Dreaming in the Athanasian Corpus', *Phronema* 31(1), 1–24.

Cunningham, M. B. (1998) 'Andrew of Crete: A High-Style Preacher of the Eighth Century', in M. Cunningham and P. Allen (eds) *Preacher and Audience: Studies in Early Christian and Byzantine Homiletics* (Leiden), 267–294.

Cunningham, M. B. (2014) 'The Impact of Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite on Byzantine Theologians', in J. A. Mihoc and L. Aldea (eds) *A Celebration of Living Theology: A Festschrift in Honour of Andrew Louth* (London), 41–58.

Daley, B. E. (ed.) (2006) *Gregory of Nazianzus* (London).

Dixon, T. (2011) 'Revolting Passions', *Modern Theology* 27(2), 298–312.

Frank, G. (2001) '"Taste and See": The Eucharist and the Eyes of Faith in the Fourth Century', *Church History: Studies in Christianity and Culture* 70(4), 619–643.

Frank, G. (2006) 'The Image in Tandem: Painting Metaphors and Moral Discourse in Late Antique Christianity', in R. Valantasis (ed.) *The Subjective Eye: Essays in Culture, Religion, and Gender in Honor of Margaret R. Miles* (Eugene), 33–47.

Gavrilyuk, P. L. (2012) 'Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite', in P. L. Gavrilyuk and S. Coakley (eds) *The Spiritual Senses: Perceiving God in Western Christianity* (Cambridge), 86–103.

Golitzin, A. (1999) 'Liturgy and Mysticism: The Experience of God in Eastern Orthodox Christianity', *Pro Ecclesia* 8(2), 159–186.

Harl, M. (1986) 'Les Origines Grecques du Mot et de la Notion de Componction dans la Septante et chez ses Commentateurs', *Revue des Etudes Augustiniennes* 32, 3–21.

Harvey, S. A. (2001) 'Spoken Words, Voiced Silence: Biblical Women in Syriac Tradition', 2000 NAPS Presidential Address, *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 9(1), 105–131.

Irmscher, J., Kazhdan, A. and Cutler, A. (1991) 'Visions', in Kazhdan 1991, 2179.

Kazhdan, A. (ed.) (1991) *ODB*, 3 vols (Oxford).

Kazhdan, A. and Cutler, A. (1991) 'Emotions', in Kazhdan 1991, 691–692.

Knuuttila, S. (2004) *Emotions in Ancient and Medieval Philosophy* (Oxford).

Konstan, D. (2006) *The Emotions of the Ancient Greeks: Studies in Aristotle and Classical Literature* (Toronto).

Krueger, D. (2013) 'The *Great Kanon* of Andrew of Crete, the Penitential Bible, and the Liturgical Formation of the Self in the Byzantine Dark Age', in B. Bitton-Ashkelony

and L. Perrone (eds) *Between Personal and Institutional Religion: Self, Doctrine and Practice in Late Antique Eastern Christianity* (Turnhout), 57–97.

Krueger, D. (2014) *Liturgical Subjects: Christian Ritual, Biblical Narrative and the Formation of Self in Byzantium* (Philadelphia).

Krueger, D. (2015) 'Liturgical Time and Holy Land Reliquaries in Early Byzantium', in C. Hahn and H. A. Klein (eds) *Saints and Sacred Matter: The Cult of Relics in Byzantium and Beyond* (Washington, D. C.), 111–132.

Lampe, G. W. H. (1961) *Patristic Greek Lexicon* (Oxford).

Le Goff, J. (1985) 'Le Christianisme et les Rêves (IIe–VIIe siècles)', in T. Gregory (ed.) *I Sogni nel Medioevo. Seminario Internazionale Roma, 2–4 Ottobre 1983* (Rome), 171–218.

Louth, A. (2004) 'The Ecclesiology of Saint Maximos the Confessor', *International Journal for the Study of the Christian Church* 4(2), 109–120.

Marinis, V. (2017) *Death and the Afterlife in Byzantium: The Fate of the Soul in Theology, Liturgy, and Art* (New York).

Mavroudi, M. (2002) *A Byzantine Book on Dream Interpretation: The Oneirocriticon of Achmet and its Arabic Sources* (Leiden).

McNamer, S. (2007) 'Feeling', in P. Strohm (ed.) *Oxford Twenty-First Century Approaches to Literature: Middle English* (Oxford), 241–257.

Meyendorff, J. (1983) *Byzantine Theology: Historical Trends and Doctrinal Themes* (New York).

Miller, P. C. (1986) '"A Dubious Twilight": Reflections on Dreams in Patristic Literature', *Church History* 55(2), 153–164.

Miller, P. C. (1994) *Dreams in Late Antiquity: Studies in the Imagination of a Culture* (Princeton).

Neil, B. (2016) 'Studying Dream Interpretation from Early Christianity to the Rise of Islam', *Journal of Religious History* 40(1), 44–64.

Neil, B., Costache, D. and Wagner, K. (forthcoming) *Dreams and Virtue in Early Christian Egypt* (Cambridge).

Nellas, P. (1997) *Deification in Christ: The Nature of the Human Person*, trans. N. Russell (New York).

Oberhelman, S. M. (1991) 'Dreams and Dream Visions', in Kazhdan 1991, 661.

Oberhelman, S. M. (2008) *Dreambooks in Byzantium. Six Oneirocritica in Translation, with Commentary and Introduction* (Aldershot).

Papalexandrou, A. (2010) 'The Memory Culture of Byzantium', in L. James (ed.) *A Companion to Byzantium* (Chichester, UK), 108–122.

Pelikan, J. (1974) *The Christian Tradition. A History of the Development of Doctrine, 2: The Spirit of Eastern Christendom (600–1700)* (Chicago).

Pelikan, J. (2005) *Acts*, Brazos Theological Commentary on the Bible (Grand Rapids).

Pelikan, J. (2011) *Imago Dei: The Byzantine Apologia for Icons* (Princeton).

Pentcheva, B. V. (2010) *The Sensual Icon: Space, Ritual, and the Senses in Byzantium* (Pennsylvania).

Pentcheva, B. V. (2014) 'Performing the Sacred in Byzantium: Image, Breath and Sound', *Performance Research* 19(3), 120–128.

Ramelli, I. L. E. (2015) 'Evagrius Ponticus, the Origenian Ascetic (and not the Origenistic 'Heretic')', in J. A. McGuckin (ed.) *Orthodox Monasticism Past and Present* (Piscataway), 159–224.

Sallis, J. (1999) *Chorology: On Beginning in Plato's* Timaeus (Bloomington).

Scheer, M. (2012) 'Are Emotions a Kind of Practice (And Is That What Makes Them Have a History)? A Bourdieuian Approach to Understanding Emotion', *History & Theory* 51(2), 193–220.

Shoemaker, S. J. (2016) 'The Afterlife of the Apocalypse of John in Byzantium', in D. Krueger and R. S. Nelson (eds) *The New Testament in Byzantium* (Washington D.C.), 301–316.

Sorabji, R. (2002) *Emotion and Peace of Mind: From Stoic Agitation to Christian Temptation* (Oxford).

Stroumsa, G. G. (1999) 'Dreams and Visions in Early Christian Discourse', in D. Shulman and G. G. Stroumsa (eds) *Dream Cultures: Explorations in the Comparative History of Dreaming* (New York, Oxford).

Taft, R. F. (2006) *Through Their Own Eyes: Liturgy as the Byzantines Saw It* (Berkeley).

Tkacz, C. B. (2003) 'Singing Women's Words as Sacramental Mimesis', *Recherches de Theologie et Philosophie Medievales* 70(2), 275–328.

Torrance, A. (2012) *Repentance in Late Antiquity. Eastern Asceticism and the Framing of the Christian Life* (Oxford).

Trypanis, C. A. (1968) *Fourteen Early Byzantine Cantica* (Vienna).

Webb, R. (1997) 'Imagination and the Arousal of the Emotions in Greco-Roman Rhetoric', in S. M. Braund and C. Gill (eds) *The Passions in Roman Thought and Literature* (Cambridge), 112–127.

CHAPTER 15

Divine Fantasy and the Erotic Imagination in the *Hymns* of Symeon the New Theologian

Derek Krueger

In the seventh of his *Erotes*, or *Hymns on Divine Love*, Symeon the New Theologian (949–1022) takes the part of the lover languishing in separation from his beloved.

> ὁ πόθος πόνος παρ' ἐμοὶ καὶ καλεῖται καὶ ἔστιν,
> ἄλγος τῷ μὴ ἰσχύειν με ὅλον περιλαβεῖν σε
> καὶ κορεσθῆναι, ὡς ποθῶ, ὑπάρχει μοι καὶ στένω·
>
> Within me yearning is called suffering, and it truly is.
> Distress because I am not able to embrace You entirely,
> and to be satisfied, as I yearn to be, so it is for me and I groan.[1]

His beloved, of course, is God, but Symeon's vocabulary and rhetoric employ tropes of erotic literature. In the first person singular, Symeon offers a lover's lament that would not be out of place in the late ancient or twelfth-century Byzantine novels, with their convoluted plots that encourage readerly delight in the separation and longing of lovers. The hymn's discourse of *pothos* (πόθος)—of longing, yearning, or desire—renders the love of God akin to lovesickness, heightening expectation of a consummation yet deferred. In the 30th hymn, Symeon describes himself crying and wailing exceedingly in his cell.

> ἐξεζήτουν γὰρ ἐκεῖνον,
> ἐκεῖνον ὅνπερ ἐπόθουν,
> οὗ ἠράσθην, οὗ τῷ κάλλει
> ὡραιότητος ἐτρώθην·

1 Symeon the New Theologian, *Hymns* 7.17–19 (Koder 1969–1973, 1:210; trans. Griggs 2010, 57). For the text, I have employed Koder's edition in consultation with Kambylis 1976. In his *Life of Symeon the New Theologian* (111, Greenfield 2013, 257), Niketas Stethatos calls the corpus "Loves of the Divine Hymns" [Τῶν θείων ὕμνων οἱ ἔρωτες]. I thank Avery Everhart, Alyssa Gabbay, Mark Masterson, Mark Rifkin, Gene Rogers, and Steven Smith for their critical insights and advice.

© KONINKLIJKE BRILL NV, LEIDEN, 2018 | DOI:10.1163/9789004375710_017

ἐφλεγόμην, ἐκαιόμην,
ὅλος ἐνεπυριζόμην.

For I was seeking Him
Him Whom I desired
for Whom I had passionate love [ἠράσθην], by Whose
youthful beauty [ὡραιότητος] I was wounded.
I was enflamed and burning
all of me set on fire.[2]

Symeon's overwhelming and passionate love recalls but does not quote erotic figures present in the Song of Songs, such as verse 3:1: "On my bed at night, I sought him whom my soul loves [ἠγάπησεν]. I sought him but I did not find him."[3] The object of Symeon's love is like a youthful male, conforming his yearning to patterns of same-sex desire of an older male for a beautiful boy, both invoking and subverting normative models for pederastic relations between social superiors and social inferiors.[4] In that sense, the *eros* celebrated in Symeon's hymns cannot be simply described as nuptial or marital, as some interpreters have done.[5] Rather, Symeon engages novelistic tropes of unconsummated desire typical of flirting or separated lovers in Byzantine romances, where longing itself often receives thematic treatment, rendering his devotion to Christ both excessive and queer. In the *Erotes* and other works, and consistent with his emphasis on the essentially somative nature of monastic practice, Symeon characterises his piety in erotic terms. Carnal fantasy pro-

2 Symeon the New Theologian, *Hymns* 30.373–378 (Koder 1969–1973, 2:366; trans. Griggs 2010, 241); cf. 30.371. For themes of erotic touch, see also *Hymns* 30.245–293. Koder 2010, 252–256 argues for a firm, or firmer, distinction between human-bodily love and longing and spiritual longing for God in Symeon's corpus.

3 Koder (1969–1973, 2:367) posits an echo also of Ps 42:2 [LXX 41:3]: "My soul thirsted for the living God." But this seems a stretch, and in any case, Symeon does not seem to be exerting himself to provide biblical license for his longing. There may be an echo of Songs 5:8 ("If you find my brotherkin [ἀδελφιδός], tell him this: I am faint with love") although the Septuagint's rendering of the Hebrew's "beloved" as a mere "brother" makes this comparison difficult, to say the least.

4 For the desiring of God because he is astoundingly beautiful, see also *Hymns* 27.117–121. On the beauty of angels and young men, see Hatzaki 2009, 86–115. Pitsakis 1993 gathers a large compendium of evidence for Byzantine condemnation of (mostly male) homosexuality. For middle Byzantine monastic opprobrium toward illicit sexual activity with reference to Theodore the Stoudite, see Hatlie 1999.

5 See, e.g., Golitzin 1995–1997, 3:73–79, 90–94; Krivocheine 1986, 361–370.

vides vivid metaphors for the devotion he feels for God, who is always already also incarnate.

God offers a most worthy object for the poet's love. In Hymn 39, God's beauty (τὸ κάλλος), "impossible … incomparable", together with his goodness (τὸ ἦθος … τὸ ἀγαθὸν), ignite desire.[6] Symeon explains to his beloved, "Because of [these], love and longing toward You / more than conquer all love and yearning of mortals."[7] In Hymn 46, Symeon will adjure his audience always to understand him "spiritually" (ἀεὶ πνευματικῶς) and not be "wretchedly defiled"; nevertheless his ascetic dispassion has yielded "unutterable pleasure of communion, / and boundless desire for a wedding feast". Thinking about this, he can barely contain himself: "I was burned up with pleasure, blazing with longing for it."[8] Love of God offers him both pleasure and pain, and this "spiritual" understanding persistently implicates the body, the senses, and the emotions. For Symeon, *pothos* for God "covers all human love [ἀγάπη]", it "turns *eros* away for fleshly pleasure", yet both *eros* and *pothos* for the Saviour are light itself.[9] While often cast as mystic, Symeon's Orthodox theology of the incarnation and his commitment to a doctrine of *theosis*, or deification, in which the entire human person would be joined to God and divinised, meant that Symeon's piety never abandoned the salvation of the flesh.[10] The body's ways of knowing and understanding remain more than simply metaphoric: they contribute materially to knowing that which is ultimately real.

In addition to many prose treatises and catechetical lectures, Symeon wrote over the course of his life a great many poems called variously "hymns" and "love songs", although they were neither set to music nor intended to be sung.[11] Around 1035, Symeon's self-proclaimed disciple, Niketas Stethatos, edited and published a corpus of some fifty-eight of these poems, some of them quite

6 Symeon the New Theologian, *Hymns* 39.1 (Koder 1969–1973, 2:476; trans. Griggs 2010, 285).

7 καὶ διὰ τοῦτο ὁ πρὸς σὲ πόθος καὶ ἡ ἀγάπη / πᾶσαν ἀγάπην τῶν βροτῶν ὑπερνικᾷ καὶ πόθον: Symeon the New Theologian, *Hymns* 39.5–6 (Koder 1969–1973, 2:476; trans. Griggs 2010, 285, modified).

8 ἐκπυρωθεὶς τῇ ἡδονῇ, φλεχθεὶς αὐτῆς τῷ πόθῳ: Symeon the New Theologian, *Hymns* 46.30–35 (Koder 1969–1973, 3:117; trans. Griggs 2010, 335, modified).

9 ἔρωτας τῶν σαρκικῶν ἡδονῶν ἀποτρέπει, φῶς δὲ ὁ ἔρως ὁ πρὸς σὲ καὶ ἡ ἀγάπη: Symeon the New Theologian, *Hymns* 39.9–14 (Koder 1969–1973, 2:476; trans. Griggs 2010, 285).

10 For patristic doctrines of deification see Russell 2006. For a sensitive treatment of Symeon's "spirituality" and categorisation as a mystic, see Koder 2010.

11 Koder (2011, 11–13, 22–24) suggests these hymns of praise were intended to be read before a small audience, in the manner of the secular Byzantine *theatron*. See also Koder 2006. On the *theatron*, see Marciniak 2007. For public reading in later centuries, see Gaul 2011.

long, totaling over 10,000 verses in three different meters.[12] While it is tempting to read the hymns as intensely personal, the poet consistently engages in *ethopoeia*, or speech-in-character, constructing a poetic subject engaged in theological meditation and aflame with fervent desire for God. Through the poems, Symeon models a contemplative and impassioned monastic "I" to assist in the formation of monks' interior lives, first those in his charge while abbot of the Monastery of St Mamas in Constantinople, and then, after his exile, across the Bosporus at the Oratory of St Marina.[13]

In exploring the love of God through unabashedly erotic discourse, Symeon recasts celibacy. Contrary to expectations, here asceticism does not, in fact, require a negation of desire. For Symeon, monastic discipline is not precisely the opposite of sex.[14] Symeon's sexualised spirituality in itself reveals the impact of the erotic imagination on Symeon's theology and his understanding of the monastic subject. He cannot convey or understand the love of God independent of human emotions and experience. Symeon redirects the focus of desire toward God. Desire for God becomes for Symeon its own sort of erotic orientation, a "facing East" full of fantasy and longing. To this end, Symeon invigorates an affective piety that structures devotion to God along novelistic lines for romantic love. Symeon's hymns celebrate such a devotional form in the Orthodox East a good century before the emergence of a similar discourse in the Roman Catholic West in the 12th century, particularly in the writings of the Cistercians, and long before the early modern divine erotics of John of the Cross and John Donne.[15]

---

12 For a discussion of technical aspects of the text and its metrics, see Koder 1969–1973, 1:17–94 and Kambylis 1976: xxii–xxvi, cccxxxiii–cccxlv. For the complexities of discerning and therefore qualifying Niketas' hand in his edition of Symeon's works, see Hinterberger 2012.

13 Most of our information about Symeon's life derives from Niketas Stethatos' *Life of Symeon the New Theologian*. For a judicious scholarly account of Symeon's biography, see Golitzin 1995–1997, vol. 3; also, Hunt 2015 and Koder 2010, 243–246. For possible biographical or autobiographical elements in the *Hymns*, see Koder 2011, 18–22; Aphentoulidou 2001, 133–140, which is also sensitive to how Niketas managed that narrative in his edition of the *Hymns*.

14 Krueger 2006, 102–103, 112–115. Burrus 2004 offers an important model for addressing the erotics of Christian ascetic narratives and scenarios. On the need to re-theorise celibacy as sexuality, see Kahan 2013, 1–32.

15 Biddick 1993; McNamer 2010; Rambuss 1998. Bynum 1982, 82–109, although her discussion of the Cistercians (110–169) somewhat problematically de-emphasises the erotic dimensions of their piety.

1 Love and Longing

In the *Hymns on Divine Love*, Symeon explores the mutual desire between God and the male monk through elaborate erotic metaphors. Elsewhere I have addressed themes of consummation with the divine through the imagery of embrace, penetration, and insemination.[16] Many of the poems cast the monk in the role of a bride, shifting his gender, engaging expectations of sexual activity on a wedding night. Others leave the monk gendered male, thus configuring the relationship between Christ and his beloved in homoerotic terms, in some cases also understanding this activity as the consummation of a marriage. In Hymn 15, for example, the "souls of all become brides".[17]

> τὸν εὔσπλαγχνον δοξάζουσι, ποθοῦσι τὸν ὡραῖον
> καὶ τῇ ἀγάπῃ τῇ αὐτοῦ ὅλῃ ὅλαι κολλῶνται·
> μᾶλλον δὲ σπέρμα ἅγιον, ὡς εἴπομεν, λαβοῦσαι
> θεὸν ὅλον ἐντὸς αὐτῶν μεμορφωμένον κτῶνται.
>
> They glorify the compassionate one, they yearn [ποθοῦσι] for the beautiful one,
> they are all united to the whole of his love [ἀγάπῃ],
> what is more they acquire the holy seed [σπέρμα], as we said,
> receiving the whole transformed God within themselves.[18]

In this image, Symeon extends the sense of the biblical verse 1 John 3:9: "These who have been born of God do not sin, because God's seed [σπέρμα] abides in them; they cannot sin, because they have been born of God."[19] While the author of the Johannine letter figures the Christian as God's progeny regenerated, Symeon renders Christians as Christ's receptive lovers, brides of Christ, first yearning for God to enter in, and then experiencing the consummation of a salvific marriage that leads to a sort of spiritual pregnancy. Significantly, Symeon subverts an asymmetric conception of the beautiful male (τὸν ὡραῖον) as the one penetrated. The monk is penetrated, but God is the pretty one.

16 Krueger 2006.

17 νύμφαι πάντων αἱ ψυχαί: Symeon the New Theologian, *Hymns* 15.221 (Koder 1969–1973, 1:294; trans. Griggs 2010, 90).

18 Symeon the New Theologian, *Hymns* 15.228–31 (Koder 1969–1973, 1:296; trans. Griggs 2010, 90, modified).

19 There may also be echoes of Gal 3:16, 29, where the Messiah is figured as Abraham's seed. For a parallel in Thomas Aquinas, see Rogers 2013, 295.

In the tenth of his *Ethical Discourses*, which likely date from 1003 to 1009, Symeon explores the theme of spiritual pregnancy in some detail.

> Πλὴν ὥσπερ γινώσκει ἡ γυνὴ σαφῶς, ὅταν ἔγγυός ἐστιν, ὅτι σκιρτᾷ τὸ βρέφος ἐν τῇ κοιλίᾳ αὐτῆς καὶ οὐκ ἄν ποτε ἀγνοήσῃ ὅτι αὐτὸ ἔνδον ἔχει ἐν ἑαυτῇ, οὕτω καὶ ὁ τὸν Χριστὸν ἔχων μεμορφωμένον ἐν ἑαυτῷ καὶ τὰς κινήσεις ἤτοι ἐλλάμψεις αὐτοῦ γινώσκει καὶ τὰ σκιρτήματα ἤτοι τὰς ἀστραπὰς αὐτοῦ ὅλως οὐκ ἀγνοεῖ καὶ τὴν μόρφωσιν αὐτοῦ ἐν ἑαυτῷ καθορᾷ.
>
> Just as a woman surely knows when she is with child that the babe leaps in her womb and could never be ignorant of the fact that she has it within her, so the one who has Christ take form within himself is aware of His stirring, which is to say His illuminations, is in no way ignorant of His leaps, that is His gleamings, and sees His formation within himself.[20]

In Symeon's erotic imaginary of salvation, God's love is all-encompassing, melding pregnancy and impregnation, penetration and presence. In Hymn 16 Symeon writes,

> λογιζομένου μου αὐτὸς εὑρίσκεται ἐντός μου,
> ἔνδον ἐν τῇ ταλαίνῃ μου καρδίᾳ ἀπαστράπτων,
> πάντοθεν περιλάμπων με τῇ ἀθανάτῳ αἴγλῃ,
> ἅπαντα δὲ τὰ μέλη μου ἀκτῖσι καταυγάζων,
> ὅλος περιπλεκόμενος ὅλον καταφιλεῖ με
> ὅλον τε δίδωσιν αὐτὸν ἐμοὶ τῷ ἀναξίῳ,
> καὶ ἐμφοροῦμαι τῆς αὐτοῦ ἀγάπης καὶ τοῦ κάλλους,
> καὶ ἡδονῆς καὶ γλυκασμοῦ ἐμπίπλαμαι τοῦ θείου·
>
> When I consider this, He himself was found within me
> flashing forth within my wretched heart,
> illuminating me from all directions with immortal radiance,
> shining upon all my members with his rays,
> folding his entire self around me He tenderly kisses all of me.
> He gives his whole self to me, the unworthy,
> and I take my fill of his love and beauty,
> and I am filled full of divine pleasures and sweetness.[21]

---

20 Symeon the New Theologian, *Ethical Discourses* 10.879–885 (Darrouzès 1966–1967, 2:332; trans. Golitzin 1995–1997, 1:169.) For themes of spiritual pregnancy in Symeon, see Hunt 2004, 204–209.

21 Symeon the New Theologian, *Hymns* 16.24–30 (Koder 1969–1973, 2:12; trans. Griggs 2010, 92).

Symeon celebrates the subject's deification not as an elevation into God or as a participation in divine community, but rather as erotic partnering, a passionate and even orgasmic satisfaction of mutual desire.

Much of Symeon's erotic discourse, however, attends not so much to union with God as to the extended longing—or *pothos*—through which he awaits it. Here as well, Symeon calls on the conventions of Byzantine erotic discourse, typified, perhaps especially in the Byzantine romance, where lovers meet, are separated, and then spend the rest of the novel chasing after each other. In these novels, the audience is carried along by readerly desire, taking pleasure in the erotic suspense.[22] Symeon harnesses both aspects of this double effect, portraying the speaking subject's desire while inciting desire in his audience.

Two novels a millennium apart present typical wisdom about the connection between desire and its lack of satisfaction. In Achilles Tatius' second-century prose fiction *Leukippe and Klitophon*, male characters debate the relative merits of the love of women and boys, and Menelaus explains to the naïve hero, "You do not know the crucial point about pleasure, Klitophon.... That which is unfulfilled always generates longing."[23] Similarly, longing figures prominently in Theodore Prodromos' twelfth-century verse romance *Rhodanthe and Dosikles*.

> ἀπόστασις γὰρ καὶ μακρυσμὸς τοῦ φίλου
> εἴωθε μᾶλλον τοὺς ποθοῦντας ἐκκάειν.
> οὐδεὶς γὰρ ἐκφλέγοιτο πρὸς φίλου πόθον,
> ἐπεὶ κατετρύφησε τῆς συνουσίας
> συνών, θεωρῶν, συλλαλῶν καθ' ἡμέραν·
>
> For absence and the removal of the beloved
> is liable to enflame those who long [τοὺς ποθοῦντας].
> For no one is consumed with longing [πόθον] for the beloved
> when he can enjoy their company by being present,
> seeing them and having daily conversation.[24]

22 On the range of readerly desires in the ancient novel, see Whitmarsh 2009; also, Whitmarsh 2011, 168–176. For a survey of sexuality and erotic themes in the ancient novel, see Morales 2008. For other manipulations of the reader, see Bartsch 1989.

23 τὸ κεφάλαιον τῆς ἡδονῆς ... ποθεινὸν γὰρ ἀεὶ τὸ ἀκόρεστον: Achilles Tatius, *Leukippe and Klitophon* 2.36 (Garnaud 1991, 68; trans. Whitmarsh 2001, 40). On the play of desire and frustration in the ancient novel, see Morales 2004, 117–130.

24 Theodore Prodromos, *Rhodanthe and Dosikles* 8.173–77 (Marcovich 1992, 133; trans. Jeffreys 2012, 131, modified).

Within these novels, and in Byzantine Greek generally, *pothos* occupied a specific semantic range. In her translation of *Rodanthe and Dosikles*, Elizabeth Jeffreys translates it variously as "passion", "desire", and "urge". What typifies this strong emotion is the gap between the lover and his or her object. Within the tradition of the Byzantine novel, this longing tends toward a passionate devotion to the absent beloved.

Central to the Greek erotic vocabulary, *pothos* lent itself easily enough as a metaphor to structure the experience of God, whom Symeon portrays as at once tantalisingly available and achingly remote. Symeon opens Hymn 7 by pondering God's simultaneous proximity and distance. "How do I worship You within me, and how do I see You far away?"[25] Centuries earlier, in their commentaries on the Song of Songs, both Origen and Gregory of Nyssa explored the passionate yearning of the Christian for the divine. In Maximos the Confessor's seventh-century *Ambiguum 48, pothos* for God results in a savouring of each part of his incarnate body as it is ingested in the eucharist.[26] Language of longing for God also appears in the literature of the Byzantine monastic reform movement of the early 9th century. In his *Longer* and *Shorter Catecheses*, Theodore the Stoudite (759–826), for example, speaks of the "*pothos* of Christ",[27] "the *pothos* of God",[28] and "divine [or holy] *pothos*".[29] With very few exceptions, however, the Middle Byzantine instances avoid extending this metaphor into the broader realm of *eros*.

Some Byzantine authors, such as Symeon's older contemporary, John Geometres (active in the second half of the 10th century) contrasted *pothos* or longing for God with earthly and profane *eros*, or love. In one iambic epigram, John wrote, "The dreadful love (*eros*) blinds my senses, / but the longing (*pothos*) for you, my Christ, restores my clarity."[30] In most authors, however, the semantic ranges of *eros* and *pothos* overlap. The Palaiologan grammarians

25 Πῶς σε ἐντός μου προσκυνῶ, πῶς δὲ μακράν σε βλέπω;: Symeon the New Theologian, *Hymns* 7.1 (Koder 1969–1973, 1:208; trans. Griggs 2010, 56).

26 Maximos the Confessor, *Ambiguum* 48 (Constas 2014, 2:212–222).

27 διὰ τὸν πόθον τοῦ Χριστοῦ: Theodore the Stoudite, *Longer Catechesis* 11 (Papadopoulos-Kerameus 1904, 75 line 4), 118 (Papadopoulos-Kerameus 1904, 878 line 4); see also *Shorter Catechesis* 107.35 (Auvray 1891, 368).

28 Τίς ὁ πόθῳ πόθον Θεοῦ συμβαλών: Theodore the Stoudite, *Shorter Catechesis*, 132.40–41 (Auvray 1891, 462).

29 τὸν θεῖον πόθον: Theodore the Stoudite, *Shorter Catechesis*, 78.29 (Auvray 1891, 270). See also Theodore the Stoudite, *Longer Catechesis* 7 (Papadopoulos-Kerameus 1904, 43 line 3) and 49 (Papadopoulos-Kerameus 1904, 353 line 21). For *eros* and *pothos* directed toward God alone, see Theodore the Stoudite, *Shorter Catechesis* 100.42–43 (Auvray 1891, 345).

30 John Geometres, *Iambic Poems* 228 (Tomadake 2014, 195; trans. Drpić 2016, 312): Ἔρως ὁ δεινὸς ἐκτυφλοῖ μου τὰς φρένας, ἀλλ' αἰθριάζει σὸς πόθος με, Χριστέ μου.

Andronikos Zarides and George Lakapenos drew the following distinction: "*Pothos* differs from *eros* insofar as *eros* refers to both present and absent things, whereas *pothos* always refers to absent things."[31] In a recent and finely wrought monograph, Ivan Drpić has explored the "erotics of devotion" with particular attention to epigrams on late Byzantine icons, calling attention to the ways patrons configured their veneration of the Virgin and of the saints as *pothos*, as yearning or longing for them.[32] Significantly, this devotional longing runs counter to general theological assertions that Christ and the saints are present in their icons.

2 Novel Scenarios and the Fantasy of Absence

Late ancient and Byzantine novelists emplotted longing, or *pothos*, in diverting and formulaic narratives. In his dedicatory epigram introducing *Rodanthe and Dosikles*, Theodore Prodromos enumerates the elements of his own tale and the romance genre as a whole:

> Κούρης ἀργυφέης καλλιστεφάνου τε Ῥοδάνθης
> καὶ κούρου Δοσικλῆος ἀγαπρεπέος τε καὶ ἐσθλοῦ
> ταῦτα, φυγαί τε πλάναι τε κλυδῶνων οἴδματα, λῃσταί,
> ἀργαλέαι στροφάλιγγες, ἐρωτοτόκοι μελεδῶνες,
> δεσμά τ' ἀλυκτοπέδαι τε καὶ ὀρφνοφόροισι μελάθροις
> εἰρκτοσύναι, θυσίαι τε παναισχέες, ἄλγεα πι[κρά],
> φαρμακόεντα κύπελλα καὶ ἁρμονίης παραλύσεις,
> ἐν δὲ γάμος τε λέχος τε καὶ ἱμερόεντες ἔρωτες.
>
> These [are the adventures] of the silvery girl Rodanthe with the lovely garland
> and of the valiant and comely youth Dosikles,
> the flights and wanderings and tempests and billows, brigands,
> grievous eddies, sorrows that give rise to love [ἐροτοτόκοι μελεδῶνες],
> chains and indissoluble fetters and imprisonments in gloomy
> dungeons, grim sacrifices, bitter grief,

31 πόθος ἔρωτος διαφέρει, καθὸ ὁ μὲν ἔρως λέγεται καὶ ἐπὶ παρόντων καὶ ἐπὶ μὴ παρόντων πραγμάτων, ὁ πόθος δὲ ἀεὶ λέγεται ἐπὶ ἀπόντων: George Lakapenos and Andronikos Zarides, *Letters and Epigrams* 24–25 (Lindstam 1924, 152; trans. Drpić 2016, 313). For the discourses of love and longing in Byzantine epistolography, see Mullett 1999 and Schneider 2008.

32 Drpić 2016, 296–331.

poisoned cups and paralysis of joints,
then the marriage and the marriage bed and passionate love.[33]

While Symeon does not engage all these elements of narrative tension and excitement, he draws heavily on the pains and agonies of desire, on the phases of the love-plot that has not yet reached its consummation. In doing so, he fans the flames of desire for God, fusing devotion and the erotic imagination.

For Symeon, the vocabulary of love and longing shapes an affective piety, a way both to describe and instill an emotional relationship with God that is not simply pleasurable and which plays upon a perception of divine absence. The prose prayer that stands at the opening of the collection of the *Hymns* invokes God's presence, calling on him to appear. "Come, You whom my miserable soul has desired and desires, Come the Alone to the alone, because I am alone, as You see!"[34] The opening of Hymn 52 borrows from the speeches of separated lovers in fiction, full of sorrow and longing. "Who shall comfort the suffering of my heart?" The next line glosses this by revealing the identity of the beloved: "But when I said 'suffering' I disclosed my yearning for the Savior."[35] Symeon does serious theological work here too, equating the yearning itself with the presence of God, so that God is not simply love, but *pothos*.[36]

In stricter theological terms, where God is understood as omnipresent or even immanent, it is not God's presence that is the product of fantasy, but the very idea of God's absence. By positing a distance between the "I" and God, Symeon creates a space that he fills with emotion. In counterpoint to a theology of presence, Symeon predicates passionate devotion on a theology of imagined absence. Indeed, the fantasy of an absent lover and the impassioned experience of tension and torment generate a powerful counterpleasure.[37]

The longing for God leads to the *telos* of consummation, but only through an elaborate sequence of twists and turns. As *Hymn* 18 explains,

---

33 Theodore Prodromos, *Dedication to Rodanthe and Dosikles* lines 19–24 (Agapitos 2000, 175–176; trans. Jeffreys 2012, 19–20). See also Jeffreys 2000.

34 ἐλθέ, ὃν ἐπόθησε καὶ ποθεῖ ἡ ταλαίπωρός μου ψυχή· ἐλθέ, ὁ μόνος πρὸς μόνον, ὅτι μόνος εἰμί, καθάπερ ὁρᾷς: Symeon the New Theologian, *Hymns*, proem. 18–20 (Koder 1969–1973, 1:150; trans. Griggs 2010, 33).

35 Τίς μου παραμυθήσεται τὸν πόνον τῆς καρδίας; πόνον δ' εἰπὼν ἐδήλωσα τὸν τοῦ σωτῆρος πόθον: Symeon the New Theologian, *Hymns*, 52.1–2 (Koder 1969–1973, 3:198; trans. Griggs 2010, 366).

36 See Griggs 2010, 366 n. 2: "The point is that the yearning *is* the real presence of God."

37 Here I am influenced by MacKendrick 1999, esp. 105–109.

Τοῦτο ἔχων οὐ καθορῶ, θεωρῶν δὲ ἀφιὲν
τάχος ὁρμῶ τοῦ δράξασθαι, καὶ ἀφίπταται ἅπαν·
ἐξαπορῶ καὶ φλέγομαι καὶ μανθάνω αἰτεῖσθαι
καὶ ἐκζητεῖν μετὰ κλαυθμοῦ ἐν πολλῇ ταπεινώσει.

When I have it [love], I do not look upon it,
I quickly hasten to grasp it, and it flies clean away.
I am completely at a loss, and I burn, and I learn to beg,
and to seek out with weeping and much humility.[38]

The "I" declares its powerlessness, identifying itself as the subject of divine caprice. Indeed, the poem seems to celebrate the subject's erotic suffering and especially his subversive pleasure in not knowing when the beloved will appear. In the subsequent lines, when God does appear, his identity is veiled, his presence at once detectable and alien. For Symeon's masochism to play out, God must tease him cruelly, allowing for gratification in God's deferral or withdrawal.

θροοῦμαι, περισφίγγομαι κρατῆσαι ταύτην θέλων
καὶ νὺξ τὰ πάντα καὶ κεναὶ αἱ ἀθλίαι μου χεῖρες·
πάντων ἐπιλανθάνομαι καὶ κάθημαι καὶ κλαίω
μὴ ἐπελπίζων ἄλλοτε ταύτην οὕτως ἰδέσθαι·
ὅτε θρηνήσω δὲ πολλὰ καὶ παύσασθαι θελήσω,
τότε ἐλθοῦσα μυστικῶς κρατεῖ τῆς κορυφῆς μου
καὶ συγχέομαι δάκρυσιν ἀγνοῶν τίς ὑπάρχει
καὶ καταυγάζει μου τὸν νοῦν φωτὶ γλυκείῳ σφόδρα·
ὅταν δὲ γνῷ, ἥτις ἐστίν, ἀφίπταται συντόμως
καταλιποῦσά μοι τὸ πῦρ τοῦ θείου αὐτῆς πόθου.

I cry out in distress, I am bound tight wishing to grasp it,
and everything is night, and my wretched hands are empty.
I forget everything and I sit and lament,
without hope of thus seeing it [love] ever again.
But when I wail much and want to stop,
then love comes mysteriously, and grabs my head,
and mingles with tears, I know not who it is,

38 Symeon the New Theologian, *Hymns*, 18.43–46 (Koder 1969–1973, 2:78; trans. Griggs 2010, 120).

and it shines upon my mind with an exceedingly sweet light.
But whenever I know who it is, love quickly flies away,
leaving for me the fire of its divine desire.[39]

Operatic in its lament and its characterisation of an inconstant, if not abusive, lover, the hymn depends on a very strange construct of divine love. Far from a denial of pleasure, Symeon hungers for Christ in tantalising foreplay.[40] Possessing this God and being possessed by him are the very goals of piety: "I make merry in love's beauty, I often embrace it, / I kiss it, and fall down in worship, I have great thankfulness / to those who have arranged for me to see what I was desiring."[41] Even as he thanks those who have taught him religion, he takes his pleasure in his subjugation to Christ. Indeed, the poem frames a safe space for role-playing in which Symeon explores erotic liberation through submission.[42]

Although he locates himself deep in the fantasy of being humiliated by God, the poetic "I" is, to some extent, aware that the God he experiences as absent is not entirely absent. And yet the partial apprehension or possession of God only feeds the longing. In *Hymn* 8, Symeon bemoans that the more he is "purified and illumined" (8.41), the more his desire for God builds.

ἐν ἀορίστῳ γὰρ βυθῷ, ἐν ἀμετρήτῳ ὕψει
τίς ἐφευρεῖν δυνήσεται μεσότητα ἢ τέλος;
οἶδα, ὅτι πολύ ἐστι, τὸ δὲ ποσὸν οὐκ οἶδα·
ἐπιποθῶ τοῦ πλείονος καὶ πάντοτε στενάζω,
ὅτι ὀλίγον τὸ δοθέν, εἰ καὶ πολὺ ἡγοῦμαι
πρὸς τὸ ὑπονοούμενον μακρόθεν μου τυγχάνειν·
ὅπερ ὁρῶν ἐπιθυμῶ καὶ δοκῶ μηδὲν ἔχειν,
μὴ αἰσθανόμενος ὅλως τοῦ δοθέντος μοι πλούτου·

39 Symeon the New Theologian, *Hymns*, 18.75–84 (Koder 1969–1973, 2:80; trans. Griggs 2010, 121–122, modified). For the *scholion*, probably Niketas', defending this passage, see Kambylis 1976, 468 and Koder 1969–1973, 2:80–81n.1.

40 MacKendrick 1999, 7 proposes that Freud's concept of "forepleasure" illuminates Christian ascetic practice. See also Harpham 1987, 46; Burrus 2004, 13–14.

41 κάλλους αὐτῆς κατατρυφῶ, συχνῶς ἀσπάζομαι ταύτην / καταφιλῶ καὶ προσκυνῶ, χάριν ἔχω μεγάλην / τοῖς ἐμὲ προξενήσασιν ἰδεῖν, ἥνπερ ἐπόθουν: Symeon the New Theologian, *Hymns*, 18.117–119 (Koder 1969–1973, 2:84; trans. Griggs 2010, 123).

42 Symeon's "play frame" for exploring his identity as God's submissive bears resemblance to the conventions of contemporary BDSM. See, e.g., Weiss 2012, 151–154 and the insights of Carrette 2005.

> For in an infinite depth, in an immeasurable height,
> who shall be able to find a middle or an end?
> I know that it is great, but I do not know how great.
> I long [ἐπιποθῶ] for more and I continually groan,
> because even though I suppose it to be much, what is given is small
> compared to what I suspect exists far away from me
> when I see the very thing that I desire, and I seem to have nothing,
> not entirely sensing the wealth [already] given to me.[43]

Symeon's longing blinds him to a God who by definition is beyond perception. He does not and cannot know the God that he desires. Symeon concedes that his longing is greedy and almost churlish, and he compares his love of God to a longing for sunshine and to sweet sensations that "drag the soul to a longing [εἰς πόθον] that is divine and beyond telling. / This soul who sees burns [with passion] and is inflamed by longing [τῷ πόθῳ]."[44] Indeed, if one is afforded a mere glimpse of God, "Who shall not long for Him?"[45] While many have come to love (ἠγάπησαν) God through the sense of hearing, and have come to have faith because of the word of Christ (8.82; compare Rom 10:17), those who have "participated in his vision and light / being known and knowing Him, how shall they not long for Him?"[46] Privileging the vision of God over the hearing of the Gospel, Symeon combines a standard hierarchy of the senses with a romantic trope of love at first sight, a torment predicated on the overwhelming power of seeing and participating in the love object's resplendent beauty.

3 The Rhetoric and Plotting of Excess

Symeon's desire for God thrives on a rhetoric of excess, more often novelistic than biblical. In Hymn 16 Symeon declares that God alone is "most desirable above the whole world" and "yearned for".[47] In portraying this love of God,

---

43 Symeon the New Theologian, *Hymns* 8.44–51 (Koder 1969–1973, 1:218; trans. Griggs 2010, 59, modified).

44 Symeon the New Theologian, *Hymns* 8.55–56 (Koder 1969–1973, 1:218; trans. Griggs 2010, 60, modified).

45 τίς ἰδὼν οὐ ποθήσει;: Symeon the New Theologian, *Hymns* 8.81 (Koder 1969–1973, 1:220; trans. Griggs 2010, 61, modified). See also *Hymns* 20.238–239.

46 οἱ δὲ καὶ θέας τῆς αὐτοῦ καὶ φωτὸς μετασχόντες / γνωσθέντες καὶ γνωρίσαντες αὐτὸν πῶς μὴ ποθοῦσιν;: Symeon the New Theologian, *Hymns* 8.84–85 (Koder 1969–1973, 1:220; trans. Griggs 2010, 61, modified).

47 ποθεινότατος ὑπὲρ ἅπαντα κόσμον … ἐπιθυμητός: Symeon the New Theologian, *Hymns* 16.6–7 (Koder 1969–1973, 2:10; trans. Griggs 2010, 92).

Symeon employs the language of the Song of Songs surprisingly rarely—the modern editor, Johannes Koder, detected a mere six instances in the corpus—, but here he echoes Song of Songs 2, 5, and 6.

> κατὰ τοῦτο τιτρώσκομαι τῇ ἀγάπῃ ἐκείνου,
> καθ' ὅσον δ' οὐχ ὁρᾶταί μοι ἐκτήκομαι τὰς φρένας,
> τὸν νοῦν καὶ τὴν καρδίαν μου φλεγόμενος καὶ στένων,
> περιπατῶ καὶ καίομαι ζητῶν ὧδε κἀκεῖσε
> καὶ οὐδαμοῦ τὸν ἐραστὴν εὑρίσκω τῆς ψυχῆς μου.
>
> This is why I am wounded by his love [ἀγάπη] (Song 2:5)
> insofar as he is not seen by me, I melt away in my senses,
> and groaning, I burn in my mind and heart.
> I walk about, and I burn, seeking here and there
> and nowhere do I find the lover [ἐραστής] of my soul (Song 5–6).[48]

When he is present with God, "[God] illuminates my face like the one I longed for",[49] but when he perceives himself alone, Symeon burns and groans like an abandoned lover. Although Symeon identifies God as the *erastēs*, the one actively loving—the lover, rather than the beloved—he understands his own longing as an exquisite suffering.[50] In that sense, Symeon subverts the expected hierarchies of pederastic relations. Far from abandoning erotic love, Symeon has redirected it, in all its agony, toward his saviour. Indeed, longing for salvation itself generates the gap between Symeon and God.

To be sure, the Psalms also provided Symeon with some precedent for employing the tropes of love between humans to the love between the Christian and God. Psalm 62 [63] uses primal urges of hunger and thirst to depict longing for God: "O God, my God, early I approach you; my soul thirsted for you. How many times did my flesh <thirst for> you in a land desolate and trackless and waterless?" (Ps 63:1 [LXX 62:2]). Waking early and thinking of God while still on his bed, the Psalmist declares: "My soul clung to you" (Ps 63:8 [LXX 62:9]).

48 Symeon the New Theologian, *Hymns* 16.9–13 (Koder 1969–1973, 2:10; trans. Griggs 2010, 92).

49 καὶ λάμπει μου τὸ πρόσωπον ὡς καὶ τοῦ ποθητοῦ μου: Symeon the New Theologian, *Hymns* 16.32 (Koder 1969–1973, 2:12; trans. Griggs 2010, 93, modified).

50 When Niketas Stethatos produced his edition of Symeon's hymns around 1035, he included a table, or *pinax*, of summaries of each poem's argument that had been compiled by a certain Alexios the Philosopher (see Koder 1969–1973, 1:22; Kambylis 1976, ccclxvii–ccclxviii). The pinax's description of Hymn 16 reads: "That by nature only the Divine is desired and longed for" [Ὅτι ποθεινόν τε καὶ ἐπιθυμητὸν κατὰ φύσιν μόνον τὸ θεῖον]. *Hymns*, pinax 16 (Koder 1969–1973, 1:140; trans. Griggs 2010, 91).

In the Hebrew, the "flesh faints" for God, but the Septuagint translators toned down the urgency of the text. Signally, Koder detected no echoes of this psalm in preparing his critical edition. Moreover, and this may be surprising, neither the word *pothos* nor the related verb *potheō* occur in the Septuagint Psalms. Neither does *erōs*. Rather the Septuagint employs *agapē* and related forms exclusively. In general, Symeon's rhetoric of love does not depend on the license of biblical prooftexts.

In many of the *Hymns*, Symeon conjures scenarios of erotic suffering and the exquisite pangs of prolonged erotic teasing. Like the extended plots of late ancient and middle Byzantine novels, Symeon's longing may tend toward the telos of marriage, but it does so through the twists and turns, the erotic play, and the discourses of longing that dominate the structure and themes of the novels' typical plotting.[51] The scenarios were intelligible to Middle Byzantine audiences because they engage generic emplotments. They place the desiring monk in familiar situations, experiencing familiar emotions.

The drawing of connections between Symeon's *Erotes* and the themes of the Greek novel, however, must proceed cautiously. We might safely speculate that Symeon's upbringing in an aristocratic family and his early career at court exposed him to elite secular literary culture before he entered the monastic life at age 28. Yet the precise shape of Constantinople's courtly love discourse in the mid to late 10th century remains uncertain. Ancient novels, such as *Leukippe and Klitophon* or Heliodoros' fourth-century *Ethiopika*, circulated in learned society. In the late 9th century, the patriarch Photios catalogued and registered his appreciation of both works in his *Bibliotheke*; Achilles Tatios was known to the tenth-century compilers of the *Suda*.[52] In the 11th century, Michael Psellos composed a literary-critical essay comparing both novels.[53] A compilation of ancient and late ancient poetry by Constantine Kephalas around 900 and its copying in the manuscript known as the *Palatine Anthology* in the 10th century by multiple scribes confirms an audience for Greek erotic epigrams.[54] Byzantines themselves apparently did not produce new novels again until the 12th century, from which four survive, including Theodore Prodromos' *Rodanthe and Dosikles* and Eumathios Makrembolites' prose romance *Hysmine*

51 On the marriage plot in the ancient Greek novel, see Whitmarsh 2011, 158–159, 165–169; Morales 2004, 144–146, 228–229; in the Byzantine novel, see Garland 1990. On mixed emotions in the ancient novel, see Fusillo 1999.

52 Burton 2008, 272–273. Photios, *Library*, codices 73 and 87 (Henry 1959–1977, 1:147–152; 2:11). *Suda Lexicon* s.v. Ἀχιλλεὺς Στάτιος (A 4695) (Adler 1984, 1:439), with the remarkable claim that he ended life as a Christian bishop.

53 Dyck 1986, 90–99; Burton 2008, 273.

54 Cameron 1970; Cameron 1993, 97–99.

and Hysminias.[55] The earlier novels, and particularly *Leukippe and Klitophon*, however, influenced the plot lines and languages of tenth-century hagiography, including the *Life of Theoktiste of Lesbos*, the *Life and Passion of Jason and Sosipatros*, and the *Passion of Romanos*.[56]

Symeon illustrates his relationship with God by employing familiar tropes, reflecting a current and possibly continuous culture of erotic discourse in the late 10th and early 11th centuries. In fact, Symeon's poems themselves provide critical evidence for the state of erotic discourse in the period.[57] His works demonstrate a willingness to access conventions of erotic narratives both to explain and to experience divine love. While not necessarily evidence for actual erotic practices, the erotic scenarios in Symeon's writings offer a window on the scope of Byzantine sexual fantasy, perhaps especially male sexual fantasy. Indeed, the scenarios presented in Symeon's corpus would seem to require ostensive referents beyond the text in the Byzantine sexual imagination in order to be intelligible. To some extent, this realm recapitulates the unequal roles of lover and beloved—whether male and female or male and male—already established in ancient and late ancient Greek literature. God shows up on both sides of the equation. Symeon's repeated longing for or staging of acts of domination, possession, and constraint expose a construction of sexuality that is hierarchical and even agonistic while remaining mutually pleasurable.

The lover's approach and arrival occasion heightened excitement. In crisp eight-syllable verse, *Hymn* 17 sets the scene for an encounter with the divine. Symeon declares:

> κάθημαι ἐν τῷ κελλίῳ
> ἐν νυκτὶ ἢ ἐν ἡμέρᾳ,
> συνυπάρχει ἀφανῶς μοι
> καὶ ἀγνώστως ἡ ἀγάπη·
> ἔξω δὲ κτισμάτων πάντων οὖσα
> ἔστιν αὖ καὶ μετὰ πάντων·
>
> I am seated in my cell
> in the night or in the day.

55 For an overview, see Beaton 1996; also, Burton 2008. On *Hysmine and Hysminias*, see Nilsson 2001.

56 Jazdzewska 2009, 264–267; Trzaskoma forthcoming a and b. For broader context, see Messis 2014b.

57 For work on the history of sexuality in middle Byzantine monasticism, see Messis 2014a; Galatariotou 1989; Kazhdan 1990; Rapp 2016, 162–170.

Love is invisibly
with me unbeknown to me.
Love is outside all creatures,
then again it is also with all things.[58]

Such a conventional theological declaration of God's omnipresence leads to an equally conventional description of the effects of loving on the lover.

ὡς οὖν πῦρ ψυχὴν θερμαίνει
καὶ καρδίαν μου ἐκκαίει
καὶ διανιστᾷ πρὸς πόθον
καὶ ἀγάπην τὴν τοῦ κτίστου·

And so as a fire it [love] warms my soul,
and inflames my heart (cf. Luke 24:32)
and excites it to desire
and to love of the Creator.[59]

In this scenario, love stokes more love, igniting desire for love itself. The beloved cues the lover's ardour. Fire, in fact, offers a common figure at early stages of romantic love. Thus in Theodore Prodromos' romance, Dosikles worries that a robber chief who has seen Rodanthe will "immediately succumb to the fire of love / and will kindle a burning flame in his heart".[60] Such a love is sudden, rendering the victim powerless. He questions his beloved, "Do you feel anything for me, are you pained in your heart? / Do you too burn from the fiery darts of passion?"[61] Symeon frequently invokes this cluster of metaphors that links fire, longing, excitement, and suffering.

In *Hymn* 29, where Symeon offers one of the most complete explorations of the emotional state of the lover of God, the speaker explains, "Longing ignites

58 Symeon the New Theologian, *Hymns* 17.319–24 (Koder 1969–1973, 2:36; trans. Griggs 2010, 103).

59 Symeon the New Theologian, *Hymns* 17.329–331 (Koder 1969–1973, 2:36; trans. Griggs 2010, 103).

60 ἔρωτος εὐθὺς ὑποδέξεται φλόγα / καὶ πῦρ ἀνάψει λάβρον ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ·: Theodore Prodromos, *Rhodanthe and Dosikles* 1.103–104 (Marcovich 1992, 4; trans. Jeffreys 2012, 23).

61 πάσχεις δι᾽ ἡμᾶς, ἀλγύνῃ τὴν καρδίαν; / ἀντιφλογίζῃ τοῖς πόθου πυρεκβόλοις;: Theodore Prodromos, *Rhodanthe and Dosikles* 2.297–298 (Marcovich 1992, 29; trans. Jeffreys 2012, 45).

longing / and the fire increases the flame."[62] Again in the eight-syllable meter, the longing itself become hyperbolic:

> τὸ ποθεῖν οὖν ὅσον θέλω
> ὑπὲρ πόθον πόθος ἔστι,
> καὶ βιάζω μου τὴν φύσιν
> ὑπὲρ φύσιν ἀγαπῆσαι·
>
> And so to yearn as much as I wish
> is a yearning beyond yearning,
> and I force my nature
> to love beyond [its?] nature.[63]

Earlier in the hymn, Symeon presents an extended account of his experience of the divine, an uncanny ecstasy that becomes an eroticised game of approach and avoidance. He opens by querying God about his sudden presence:

> Πόθεν ἔρχῃ, πῶς εἰσέρχῃ,
> ἔνδοθεν τῆς κέλλης λέγω,
> πάντοθεν ἠσφαλισμένης;
>
> From where do You come, how do You enter,
> I mean into my cell,
> which is secured on all sides (cf. John 20:19)?[64]

Rather like a romantic hero who makes his way secretly and unannounced into his beloved's dwelling, God enters into the dark space and illuminates it.[65] The encounter is as disordering as it is exciting. Symeon reports, "and I am beside myself, and I am rendered / outside my senses and beyond words".[66] Although he has been a sinner, God has called to him, and he is now obedient, at least to a point. "He / called me to repentance / and immediately I followed / the

62 πόθος γὰρ πόθον ἀνάπτει / καὶ τὸ πῦρ τρέφει τὴν φλόγα: Symeon the New Theologian, *Hymns* 29.316–317 (Koder 1969–1973, 2:336; trans. Griggs 2010, 228 [modified]).

63 Symeon the New Theologian, *Hymns* 29.339–342 (Koder 1969–1973, 2:338; trans. Griggs 2010, 228). Griggs translates, "beyond its nature", but I am unsure whether the possessive is warranted. On this passage, see also Koder 2010, 254–255.

64 Symeon the New Theologian, *Hymns* 29.1–3 (Koder 1969–1973, 2:314; trans. Griggs 2010, 218).

65 One thinks, for example, of the episode in Achilles Tatius, *Leukippe and Klitophon*, 2.23–26.

66 καὶ ἐξίσταμαι καὶ ἔξω / γίνομαι φρενῶν καὶ λόγων: Symeon the New Theologian, *Hymns* 29.15–16 (Koder 1969–1973, 2:314; trans. Griggs 2010, 219).

Master Who called me."[67] But the vocation of a disciple quickly becomes a lover's sport of hide-and-seek.

τρέχοντι οὖν κατέτρεχον·
φεύγοντι αὖ ἐδίωκον
ὡς τὸν λαγωὸν ὁ κύων·
μακρυνθέντος ἀπ' ἐμοῦ δὲ
καὶ κρυβέντος τοῦ σωτῆρος,
οὐκ ἀπήλπιζον ἔγωγε,
οὐδ' ὡς ἀπολέσας τοῦτον
ἐστρεφόμην εἰς τοὐπίσω,
ἀλλ' ἐν ᾧ εὑρέθην τόπῳ
καθεζόμενος ἐθρήνουν·
ἔκλαιον καὶ ἀντεκάλουν
τὸν κρυβέντα μοι δεσπότην.
....
καὶ ἀφίπτατο, καὶ πάλιν
κατεδίωκον· καὶ οὕτως
ἀπιόντος ἐρχομένου,
κρυπτομένου φαινομένου,
οὐκ ἐστράφην εἰς τοὐπίσω·

And so when He ran, I left in haste,
and so when He fled, I gave chase
like a dog pursuing a hare.
But when the Savior was removed
and hiding far away from me,
I did not despair
nor did I turn backwards
as though having lost Him.
But in the place I found myself
I sat and wailed (cf. Ps 137:1 [LXX 136:1]),
crying and in turn inviting
the hidden Master to me.
....
He flew away, and again
I pursued, and thus

67 πρὸς μετάνοιαν δὲ εἶπον / ὅτι κέκληκέ με μᾶλλον, / καὶ εὐθέως τῷ καλοῦντι / ἠκολούθησα δεσπότῃ: Symeon the New Theologian, *Hymns* 29.50–53 (Koder 1969–1973, 2:318; trans. Griggs 2010, 220).

going away, coming,
hiding Himself, appearing,
I did not turn back.[68]

Playing the coy object of pursuit, God would seem to desire Symeon's striving and eagerness. Perhaps not entirely reassured, Symeon declares, "I did not give up running, / I did not suppose that He was leading me astray, / or that he was thoroughly testing me [cf. Jas 1:13]."[69] God invisible, the "one not seen" (29.88) can be remarkably difficult to catch. Symeon echoes the words of the lover in Song of Songs 3:1, who walks about the city asking, "Have you seen him whom my soul loves?", Symeon writes:

ἐπληρούμην τε δακρύων
καὶ τοὺς πάντας ἐπηρώτων,
τούς ποτε αὐτὸν ἰδόντας·
....
τούτους οὖν μετὰ δακρύων
καὶ σφοδροῦ καρδίας πόνου
ἐπηρώτων τοῦ εἰπεῖν μοι,
ποῦ ποτε αὐτὸν κατεῖδον.

And I was filled with tears,
and I asked everyone
if they ever saw Him.
....
And so with tears
and the vehement yearning of my heart
I asked them to tell me,
wherever they saw Him.[70]

As in the biblical text, the seeking soul finds the lover, although (unlike the speaker of the Song) he cannot immediately hold him and bring him "into my mother's house, into the chamber of her who conceived me" (Song 3:4). Symeon runs with all his power and catches only a momentary glimpse. "Thence when

68 Symeon the New Theologian, *Hymns* 29.54–65, 77–81 (Koder 1969–1973, 2:318–320; trans. Griggs 2010, 220–221). For another treatment of chasing after God, see *Hymns* 18.31–36.

69 οὐκ ἐνέδωκα τοῦ τρέχειν / οὐδ' ὡς πλάνον ἡγησάμην / ἢ πειράζοντά με ὅλως: Symeon the New Theologian, *Hymns* 29.83–85 (Koder 1969–1973, 2:320; trans. Griggs 2010, 221).

70 Symeon the New Theologian, *Hymns* 29.91–93, 105–108 (Koder 1969–1973, 2:320–322; trans. Griggs 2010, 221).

I saw my desire [τὸν πόθον, or: 'my longing'], / He was seen just a bit [μετρίως] by me."[71] The game continues, although eventually Symeon allows that when he separates himself from the world, presumably through rigorous asceticism and contemplation, the invisible reveals himself. "Therefore—listen to me—," he nearly gasps, "He meets me and lets himself be found!"[72]

4 The Fantasies of Celibacy

To be sure, Symeon's hymns narrate a divine erotics engaged under conditions of expected celibacy. Indeed Symeon emphasises ascetic discipline as critical to maintaining desire for God. Echoing John 14:6, he exhorts his listeners or readers, "Yearn for Him and hate the world!"[73] Not an abandonment of desire, detachment from the world involves desire's reorientation. But the paradox of the passionate and the chaste in itself provides a pleasure in restraint, a counterpleasure, as Symeon declares,

> καὶ νεκροῦται παραδόξως
> ζῶν ὁ ἔρως τότε μᾶλλον·
> ζῇ γὰρ ἐν ἐμοὶ καὶ θάλλει.
>
> paradoxically the passionate love [ἔρως]
> is mortified while living even more,
> for it lives and flourishes in me.[74]

And yet expression of this new love maintains continuity with the behaviours of earthly love and its attendant emotions.

> ἐπαπολαύω τῆς χαρᾶς τῆς ἀρρήτου καὶ θείας,
> κάλλους αὐτῆς κατατρυφῶ, συχνῶς ἀσπάζομαι ταύτην.[75]

---

71 ὅθεν βλέπων μου τὸν πόθον / καθωρᾶτο μοι μετρίως: Symeon the New Theologian, *Hymns* 29.115–116 (Koder 1969–1973, 2:322; trans. Griggs 2010, 222).

72 οὗτος οὖν, ἀκούσατέ μου / συναντήσας εὕρατό με: Symeon the New Theologian, *Hymns* 29.135–136 (Koder 1969–1973, 2:324; trans. Griggs 2010, 222).

73 τοῦτον πόθησον καὶ μισήσεις τὸν κόσμον: Symeon the New Theologian, *Hymns* 57.6 (Koder 1969–1973, 3:270; trans. Griggs 2010, 398).

74 Symeon the New Theologian, *Hymns* 29.346–348 (Koder 1969–1973, 2:338; trans. Griggs 2010, 229).

75 Reading ταύτην with Kambylis 1976, 147 rather than αὕτην with Koder 1969–1973, 2:84; however, the last three words of this line are conjectural. See the apparatus in both editions.

καταφιλῶ καὶ προσκυνῶ, χάριν ἔχω μεγάλην
τοῖς ἐμὲ προξενήσασιν ἰδεῖν, ἥνπερ ἐπόθουν,
καὶ τοῦ ἀφράστου μετασχεῖν φωτὸς καὶ φῶς γενέσθαι.

I revel in unspeakable and divine joy;
I make merry in love's beauty, I often embrace,
I kiss it, and fall down in worship, I have great thankfulness
to those who have arranged for me to see what I was desiring,
to partake in the inexpressible light and to become light.[76]

The lover is smitten by what he sees; with his body, he worships. He holds his beloved fast. Romantic kissing and devotional osculation are nearly indistinguishable. Christian piety enacts an extended lovemaking. The fantasy of absence makes the experience of presence all the sweeter.

This relationship between carnal desire and desire for God does not reduce to a "mere metaphor" or simple binary, one that might erase the metaphor's referent by transferring its sense to another thing.[77] Rather, knowledge of the experience of one contributes to the indescribable experience of the other.[78] Under these conditions, carnal and spiritual *eros* engage in mutual constitution, shaping, defining, but not necessarily bounding each other. Thus in Symeon, human love provides the frame of reference for the experience and emotions of divine love. Even as human love pales before love of the divine ("just as the shadow or the darkness of night cannot touch the sun"),[79] human longing offers the epistemological ground for Symeon's love of God. On the one hand, there is no better way for Symeon to express his love for God than to use the language he must qualify. On the other hand, his carnal imaginary fleshes

76 Symeon the New Theologian, *Hymns* 18.116–120 (Koder 1969–1973, 2:84; trans. Griggs 2010, 123). On the immateriality of the light in Symeon's thought, see Koder 2010, 259–263.

77 For the ways in which metaphors shape the reality they are used to describe, I have found useful work on Medieval Kaballah. See Green 2002, esp. 19, 43–44; Haskell 2008. For additional perspective from anthropologists, see Fernandez 1986; Turner 1991.

78 Symeon's insistence that he be understood to be speaking "spiritually" is not grounded in a rejection of the flesh (and here I disagree with Koder 2010, 252–255). Instead, he calls on an exegetical distinction, most famously articulated in Origen's *On First Principles* and included in Gregory of Nazianzus' *Philokalia*, between the plain sense of a text, the meaning "according to the flesh", and the meaning according to the spirit. Although Origen posited that there were indeed some biblical passages with no "fleshly" meaning at all, in most cases, the text could and should be understood on both levels. See Origen, *On First Principles* 4.2 (Görgemanns and Karpp 1976, 649–730); Drake 2013, 42–45.

79 ὡς οὐδ' ἡλίῳ ἡ σκιὰ ἢ τῆς νυκτὸς τὸ σκότος: Symeon the New Theologian, *Hymns* 46.39 (Koder 1969–1973, 3:116; trans. Griggs 2010, 335).

out an understanding of the spiritual that is always also incarnate. Symeon revels in the language of bondage, describing himself as "gripped by your desire, chained by your love".[80] Constraint becomes fulfillment, and longing becomes an end in itself. What love then is this, this love of God, expressed in terms of yearning, of desire extended and consummation deferred? It is the love of romance, a fantasy plotted along the outlines of Greek novels, a love suspended and prolonged, a longing that entwines the separated lovers and enthralls the monastic imagination.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

Achilles Tatius (1991) *Leukippe and Klitophon*. Ed. J.-P. Garnaud (Paris). Trans. T. Whitmarsh (2001) *Achilles Tatius: Leucippe and Clitophon* (Oxford).

Eumathios Makrembolites (2001) *Hysmine and Hysminias*. Ed. M. Marcovich, *Eustathius Macrembolites: De Hysmines et Hysminiae amoribus libri IX* (Leipzig). Trans. E. Jeffreys (2012) in *Four Byzantine Novels* (Liverpool), 157–269.

George Lakapenos and Andronikos Zarides (1924) *Letters and Epigrams*. Ed. S. Lindstam, *Georgii Lacapeni et Andronici Zaridae Epistulae XXXII cum Epimerismis Lacapeni* (Gothenburg).

John Geometres (2014) *Iambic Poems*. Ed. M. Tomadake 'Ιωάννης Γεωμέτρης, Ιαμβικά Ποιήματα, Κριτική έκδοση, μετάφραση και σχόλια'. Unpub. PhD thesis (Thessaloniki).

Maximos the Confessor (2014) *Ambigua.* Ed. and trans. N. Costas, *On Difficulties in the Church Fathers: The Ambigua*, 2 vols (Cambridge).

Niketas Stethatos (2013) *Life of Symeon.* Ed. and trans. R. P. H. Greenfield, *The Life of Saint Symeon the New Theologian* (Cambridge).

Origen (1976) *On First Principles*. Eds H. Görgemanns and H. Karpp, *Origenes vier Bücher von den Prinzipien* (Darmstadt), 462–560, 668–764.

Photios (1959–1977) *Library.* Ed. R. Henry, *Bibliotheca.* 8 vols (Paris).

Suda Lexicon (1984) Ed. A. Adler, *Suidae Lexicon: Pars 1: A–Γ*, Lexicographi graeci 1 (Munich; repr. 2001).

Symeon the New Theologian (1966–1967) *Ethical Discourses*. Ed. J. Darrouzès, *Traités théologiques et éthiques*, 2 vols, SC 122, 129 (Paris). Trans. A. Golitzin (1995–1997), *On the Mystical Life: The Ethical Discourses*, 3 vols (Crestwood).

80 κρατούμενος τῷ πόθῳ σου, δεδεμένος ἀγάπῃ: Symeon the New Theologian, *Hymns* 41.36 (Koder 1969–1973, 3:12; trans. Griggs 2010, 392).

Symeon the New Theologian (1969–1973) *Hymns*. Ed. J. Koder and trans. J. Paramelle, *Hymnes.* 3 vols, SC 156, 174, 196 (Paris). Trans. D. K. Griggs (2010) *Divine Eros: Hymns of Saint Symeon the New Theologian* (Crestwood).

Symeon the New Theologian (1976) *Hymns*. Ed. A. Kambylis, *Hymnen*, Supplementa Byzantina 3 (Berlin).

Theodore Prodromos (1992) *Rhodanthe and Dosikles*. Ed. M. Marcovich (Leipzig). Trans. E. Jeffreys (2012) in *Four Byzantine Novels* (Liverpool), 3–156.

Theodore the Stoudite (1891) *Shorter Catechesis*. Ed. E. Auvray, *Theodori Studitis Parva Catechesis* (Paris).

Theodore the Stoudite (1904) *Longer Catechesis*. Ed. A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, *Theodoros Studites: Μεγάλη κατήχησις* (St Petersburg).

Secondary Sources

Agapitos, P. (2000) 'Poets and Painters: Theodoros Prodromos' Dedicatory Verses of His Novel to an Anonymous Caesar', *Jahrbuch der österreichischen Byzantinistik* 50, 173–185.

Aphentoulidou, E. (2001) 'Οι ύμνοι του Συμεών Νέου Θεολόγου: Σχέσεις των επιγραφών με τους ύμνους', *Βυζαντινά* 22, 123–147.

Bartsch, S. (1989) *Decoding the Ancient Novel: The Reader and the Role of Description in Heliodorus and Achilles Tatius* (Princeton).

Beaton, R. (1996) 'The Byzantine Revival of the Ancient Novel', in G. Schmeling (ed.) *The Novel in the Ancient World* (Leiden), 713–733.

Biddick, K. (1993) 'Genders, Bodies, Borders: Technologies of the Visible', *Speculum* 68, 389–418.

Burrus, V. (2004) *The Sex Lives of Saints: An Erotics of Ancient Hagiography* (Philadelphia).

Burton, J. B. (2008) 'Byzantine Readers', in T. Whitmarsh (ed.) *The Cambridge Companion to the Greek and Roman Novel* (Cambridge), 272–281.

Bynum, C. W. (1982) *Jesus as Mother: Studies in the Spirituality of the High Middle Ages* (Berkeley).

Cameron, A. (1970) 'Michael Psellus and the Date of the Palatine Anthology', *GRBS* 11, 339–350.

Cameron, A. (1993) *The Greek Anthology from Meleager to Planudes* (Oxford).

Carrette, J. (2005) 'Intense Exchange: Sadomasochism, Theology and the Politics of Late Capitalism', *Theology and Sexuality* 11, 11–30.

Drake, S. (2013) *Slandering the Jew: Sexuality and Difference in Early Christian Texts* (Philadelphia).

Drpić, I. (2016) *Epic, Art, and Devotion in Later Byzantium* (Cambridge).

Dyck, A. (1986) *Michael Psellus: The Essays on Euripides and George of Pisidia and on Heliodorus and Achilles Tatius*, Byzantina Vindobonensia 16 (Vienna).

Fernandez, J. (1986) *Persuasions and Performances: The Play of Tropes in Culture* (Bloomington).

Fusillo, M. (1999) 'The Conflict of Emotions: A *Topos* in the Ancient Greek Novel', in S. Swain (ed.) *Oxford Readings in the Greek Novel* (Oxford), 60–82.

Galatariotou, C. (1989) '*Eros* and *Thanatos*: A Byzantine Hermit's Conception of Sexuality', *BMGS* 13, 95–137.

Garland, L. (1990) '"Be Amorous, But Be Chaste": Sexual Morality in Byzantine Learned and Vernacular Romance', *BMGS* 14, 62–120.

Gaul, N. (2011) *Thomas Magistros und die spätbyzantische Sophistik: Studien zum Humanismus urbaner Eliten der frühen Palaiologenzeit*, Mainzer Veröffentlichungen zur Byzantinistik 10 (Wiesbaden).

Green, A. (2002) 'Shekhinah, the Virgin Mary, and the Song of Songs: Reflections on a Kabbalistic Symbol in Its Historical Context'", *Association for Jewish Studies Review* 26, 1–52.

Harpham, G. G. (1987) *The Ascetic Imperative in Culture and Criticism* (Chicago).

Haskell, E. (2008) 'Metaphor, Transformation, and Transcendence: Toward an Understanding of Kabbalistic Imagery in *Sefer hazohar*', *Prooftexts* 28, 335–362.

Hatlie, P. (1999) 'The City a Desert: Theodore of Stoudios on Porneia', in L. James (ed.) *Desire and Denial in Byzantium*, Society for the Promotion of Byzantine Studies Publications 6 (Aldershot), 67–74.

Hatzaki, M. (2009) *Beauty and the Male Body in Byzantium: Perceptions and Representation in Art and Text* (London).

Hinterberger, M. (2012) 'Ein Editor und sein Autor: Niketas Stethatos und Symeon Neos Theologos', in P. Odorico (ed.) *La face cachée de la littérature byzantine. Le texte en tant que message immédiat*, Dossiers Byzantines 11 (Paris), 247–264.

Hunt, H. (2004) *Joy-bearing Grief: Tears of Contrition in the Writings of the Early Syrian and Byzantine Fathers* (Leiden).

Hunt, H. (2015) *A Guide to St. Symeon the New Theologian* (Eugene).

Jazdzewska, K. (2009) 'Hagiographic Invention and Imitation: Niketas' Life of Theoktiste and Its Literary Models', *GRBS* 49, 257–79.

Jeffreys, E. (2000) 'A Date for *Rodanthe and Dosikles?*', in P. A. Agapitos and D. R. Reinsch (eds) *Der Roman in Byzanz in Komnenenzeit*, Meletemata 8 (Frankfurt), 127–136.

Kahan, B. (2013) *Celibacies: American Modernism and Sexual Life* (Durham).

Kazhdan, A. (1990) 'Byzantine Hagiography and Sex in the Fifth to Twelfth Centuries', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 44, 131–143.

Koder, J. (2006) 'Γιατί ὁ Συμεών ὁ Νέος Θεολόγος ἔγραφε τούς ὕμνους του;', *Νέα Εστία* 1794, 806–819.

Koder, J. (2010) 'Symeon Neos Theologos: Monch, Mystiker, Dichter', *Ostkirchliche Studien* 59, 239–268.

Koder, J. (2011) *Die Hymnen Symeons, des Neos Theologos: Überlegungen zur literarischen Einordnung und zu den Intentionen des Authors* (Munich).

Krivocheine, B. (1986) *In the Light of Christ: St. Symeon the New Theologian: Life, Spirituality, Doctrine*, trans. A. P. Gythiel (Crestwood).

Krueger, D. (2006) 'Homoerotic Spectacle and the Monastic Body in Symeon the New Theologian', in V. Burrus and C. Keller (eds) *Toward a Theology of Eros: Transfiguring Passion at the Limits of Discipline* (New York) 99–118, 399–403.

MacKendrick, K. (1999) *Counterpleasures* (Albany).

Marciniak, P. (2007) 'Byzantine Theatron: A Place of Performance', in M. Grünbart (ed.) *Theatron: Rhetorische Kultur in Spätantike und Mittelalter*, Millenium-Studien 13 (Berlin), 277–285.

McNamer, S. (2010) *Affective Meditation and the Invention of Medieval Compassion* (Philadelphia).

Messis, C. (2014a) 'Fluid Dreams, Solid Consciences: Erotic Dreams in Byzantium', in C. Angelidi and G. T. Calophonos (eds) *Dreaming in Byzantium and Beyond* (Farnham and Burlington, VT), 187–205.

Messis, C. (2014b) 'Fiction and/or Novelisation in Byzantine Hagiography', in S. Efthymiadis (ed.) *The Ashgate Research Companion to Byzantine Hagiography*, *Volume II: Genres and Contexts* (Farnham), 313–341.

Morales, H. (2004) *Vision and Narrative in Achilles Tatius' Leucippe and Clitophon* (Cambridge).

Morales, H. (2008) 'The History of Sexuality', in T. Whitmarsh (ed.) *The Cambridge Companion to the Greek and Roman Novel* (Cambridge), 39–55.

Mullett, M. (1999) 'From Byzantium, with Love', in L. James (ed.) *Desire and Denial in Byzantium* (Aldershot), 3–22.

Nilsson, I. (2001) *Erotic Pathos, Rhetorical Pleasure: Narrative Technique and Mimesis in Eumathios Makrembolites'* Hysminei and Hysminias (Uppsala).

Pitsakis, K. (1993) 'Η θέση των ομοφυλοφίλων στη βυζαντινή κοινωνία', in C. A. Maltezou (ed.) *Πρακτικά Ημερίδας. Οι περιθωριακοί στο Βυζάντιο* (Athens), 171–269.

Rambuss, R. (1998) *Closet Devotions* (Durham).

Rapp, C. (2016) *Brother-Making in Late Antiquity and Byzantium: Monks, Laymen, and Christian Ritual* (Oxford).

Rogers, Jr. E. F. (2013) *Aquinas and the Supreme Court: Race, Gender, and the Failure of Natural Law in Thomas's Biblical Commentaries* (Oxford).

Russell, N. (2006) *The Doctrine of Deification in the Greek Patristic Tradition* (Oxford).

Schneider, J. (2008) 'L'Expression hyperbolique de l'amitié dans les lettres d'un moine byzantin', in P. Zoberman (ed.) *Queer: Ecritures de la différence? Volume 1: Autres temps, autres lieux* (Paris), 79–101.

Trzaskoma, S. M. (Forthcoming a) 'Another Question Addressed to the Scholars Who Believe in the Authenticity of Kaminiates' *Capture of Thessalonica*', *ByzZ*.

Trzaskoma, S. M. (Forthcoming b) 'Novelistic Discourse and Fictionality in 10th-Century Hagiography: The Cases of the *Life and Passion of Sts. Jason and Sosipatrus* (BHG 776) and the *Passion of St. Romanos* (BHG 1600z)'.

Turner, T. (1991) '"We Are Parrots," "Twins Are Birds": Play of Tropes as Operational Structures', in J. Fernandez (ed.) *Beyond Metaphor: The Play of Tropes in Culture* (Stanford), 121–158.

Weiss, M. (2012) *Techniques of Pleasure: BDSM and the Circuits of Sexuality* (Durham).

Whitmarsh, T. (2009) 'Desire and the End of the Greek Novel', in I. Nilsson (ed.) *Plotting with Eros: Essays on the Poetics of Love and the Erotics of Reading* (Copenhagen), 135–152.

Whitmarsh, T. (2011) *Narrative and Identity in the Ancient Greek Novel: Returning Romance* (Cambridge).

General Index

Achilles Tatius 321
Aëtius of Amida 4, 40
Āʾisha 213–214
Al-Bukhārī 211n, 213
Al-Hakīm Al-Tirmidhī 212, 213
Al-Nadīm 45–46
Al-Qāyinī, Abū Jaʾfar 213–214
Al-Ṭabarī 209, 220–222
alchemy 43
Alexander the Great 119
Alexandria 111, 126, 190, 205
Ammianus Marcellinus 111–113
Anastasius, emp. 97–107, 111, 185n, 189, 190n, 202, 216
Anastasius of Sinai 43–45, 199, 309
Andrew of Crete 293–295, 300–308
Andronikos Zarides 323
Anonymus Valesianus 6, 99–101, 106–107
Antioch 104, 162–172, 176, 190, 199, 215
Antony the Great 22, 298
Apocalypse of John 147–148, 296
apocalyptic 6–7, 118–123, 128, 131–133, 174, 210n, 218
Apophthegmata patrum 19n
Arab 208, 219n, 221–222, 260
  Arabic 2, 4, 35, 41, 42, 45–46, 208, 209, 212, 213n, 220n
Aristotle 4, 24n, 36, 42, 65n, 83n, 231
  Aristotelian 38, 86, 212
Armenia 6, 11, 160, 164, 167
  Armenians 160–163, 166–173
    independence of 7, 164, 172, 176
    Church 168, 173
    language 6, 46, 160, 161n, 219n
    map of 164
Armilos 6, 129–130
Artemidorus 17, 85, 208n
Athanasius of Alexandria 84–85, 281n, 294, 296–297, 303, 309
Attaleiates, Michael 232–234
Augustine of Hippo 91n

Barsanuphius 18n
Basil I, emp. 143, 185n, 194–197
Basil II, emp. 176, 193nn, 228
Basil of Casearea/the Great 139, 184n, 188, 243, 297
Basilakes, Nikephoros 162n, 167–168, 174n
beauty 59–61, 233, 317, 326
  physical 59, 304, 305n, 316, 320, 327, 336
  spiritual 59, 302, 305
Bocchoris the Just 58
bride 297, 319

Callinicus 110–111
Calofonos, G. T. 8n, 122n, 143n, 183, 185, 189–190, 194, 208n, 209, 211, 215–217, 218n
Cassian, John 4, 20–22, 24–25, 29
Cassius Dio 112
Cedrenus *see* Kedrenos
Chadiga 190, 205
Chalcedon, Council of 39, 106, 190, 206n, 215
  Chalcedonian 106, 162, 168, 215
    Neochalcedonian 45
    Non-Chalcedonian 106, 169
Chonai 267–268, 281
Choniates, Niketas 160n–165, 168–169, 170n–173n
Christ *see* Jesus Christ *and* Logos
Christological 106, 215n
chronicles (*see also* historiography) 158–160, 168–170
  annalistic 217n, 220
  Byzantine 102, 181–190, 215–219, 232
  Islamic 208, 210, 212, 219–222
  universal 7
Chronicon Paschale 102, 104
chronography 209, 212, 215, 222
Church of the East 41, 45
Cicero 59n
Cilicia 7, 161–167, 169–171, 173–176
Claudian 6, 111n, 112
Clement of Alexandria 3–5, 11, 22, 57–70, 73–76
cognition 4, 11, 22, 43, 48, 49
cognitive science 18–19, 25–28, 29–30, 49
Collectio Avellana 104n
Colossae 267–268, 272, 278, 281

communion 20–21, 29, 254n, 258, 300, 302, 310, 317, 322
Constans II, emp. 6, 119, 122n, 131–132, 216–217
Constantine V (Kopronymos), emp. 190
Constantine VII, emp. (Porphyrogenitus) 103, 185n, 192
Constantine VIII, emp. 185n, 193n
Constantinople 2, 92, 100, 104, 106–107, 109, 111, 119, 125, 131, 162–163, 165, 171, 175, 187, 189n, 190, 194–195, 249, 255, 259, 271a, 318, 329
Constantius II, emp. 112, 187
Corippus 6, 99, 107–111
court, imperial 6, 99–102, 107–111, 113, 115, 121, 124, 132, 140n, 165, 173–175, 234, 245, 257, 329
Cross, the 7, 175, 183n, 184, 186–187, 189n, 190, 202, 203, 216, 219, 241–242n, 267, 218
Crusade, First 161–163
Crusade, Second 169n
Cyril of Alexandria 204, 255–256, 258

daydreams (*see also* dreams, visions) 5, 58, 60, 64–66, 67, 75
desire (see also *eros, pothos*) 58–59, 64–66, 69n, 71, 73n, 136, 315, 319
  erotic 4, 10, 18, 22, 25, 57–59, 71, 145, 296, 317–318, 321–322, 324, 326–328, 335–337
    homoerotic 7, 137–156, 316
  repression of 3, 25–26, 28, 29n, 58
  suppression of 4, 26–30
Diogenes of Oinanda 267n
Dionysius the Areopagite 5, 73–74, 300n, 301n
disaster(s) 6, 124, 125, 128, 160
dream (key) manuals 2, 8, 85, 208–209
dreams (*see also* daydreams, nightmares, visions) 1–11, 17–19, 25–28, 30, 44, 47, 57–75, 81–86, 89, 90–91, 99, 111–115, 119, 122, 142–145, 208–212, 230, 293–300
  angelic 68n, 131, 202, 211, 213, 222, 242, 271, 298
  demonic 2, 58, 70, 75, 85, 198, 211, 212, 297–298
  dynastic 99–111
  erotic/sexual 2n–3, 4, 10, 17–30, 57–58, 72n, 150
    homoerotic 3, 7, 10, 154–156
  god-sent (*see also* revelation) 57, 66, 85, 189, 211–212
  mantic 61n, 210, 212
  monastic 3, 17–30, 122, 294, 297
  portentous *see* dreams, prophetic; portent(s)
  prophetic 2, 5, 8, 68, 83–86, 90, 123–130, 210–212, 216, 294n
dynasty 6–7, 105–106, 112, 128, 212, 220
  Heraclian 118–119, 123, 131–132
  Macedonian 7 *see also* Konstantinos VII, Porphyrogennetos

earthquake(s) 8, 185, 190, 194, 204
Egypt 3, 18–20, 23, 127, 215, 219n, 221–222, 233, 244, 253, 255
emissions, nocturnal 17–18, 21–23, 25, 29
emperor(s) 2–3, 6–7, 11, 69, 85, 99–115, 118–119, 123–125, 127, 132, 136–137, 139–140, 145, 150, 152–153, 161–162, 165, 166n, 168–176, 184n, 185n, 188, 190–197, 202–206, 208, 216–219, 228–235, 241, 249n, 258n, 267, 274n
epiphanies 269–272, 286
Eros/*eros* (*see also* desire, *pothos*) 60–62, 66n, 138, 147, 149, 155, 316–317, 323, 329, 336
eschatological 10, 120–121, 294, 300, 310
eschaton 121, 295, 300, 309
Eucharist (*see* communion)
Eudoxia, empress 253–254, 257–258, 260
Eumathios Makrembolites 329
Euphemia, st 190
Eusebius of Caesarea 69–70, 75, 281n
Evagrius of Pontus 2, 4–5, 11, 18n, 22n, 23, 29n, 67, 70–75, 85, 297
Evagrius Scholasticus 101, 102n, 104nn, 105n, 106, 109, 111, 188

fantasy/fantasies 3, 10, 51, 58, 67, 71–73, 230, 324, 326, 336
  erotic/sexual 10, 58, 69–72, 316, 318, 330
Franks 160–162, 173
Freud, S. 3, 17, 25–26, 28, 210, 326n
friendship 7, 136, 149, 154

Gabriel, archangel 190, 203, 205, 213, 217, 222, 278
Galen 4, 36–37, 39n, 40n, 41n, 46n, 48

Gaza 3, 211
gender 10, 319
genre 3, 6, 8, 107, 120–122, 136–137, 139, 154, 208–209, 212, 227, 230n, 235, 245, 323
George Lakapenos 323
George of Alexandria 9, 256, 259nn, 260nn
George of Pisidia 119
Great Kanon 294–296, 299–310
Gregory, exarch of Carthage 6, 122n, 131
Gregory of Nazianzus 284n, 299n, 336n
Gregory of Nyssa 3, 46, 281n, 284n, 297, 310, 322
Gregory Palamas 91–92
Gregory the Priest 161, 164n, 166n, 171–173

hagiography (*see also* saints, *Lives of*) 1–2, 8–9, 19–20, 85, 128, 140n, 195, 208–215, 222, 250, 256nn–260, 277n, 285, 298, 315n, 318n, 330
healing 267, 268, 270, 273–275, 277–279, 282–283, 286
Hellenists 22n, 57, 266, 268n
Heraclius, emp. 118–119, 123–124, 129–131, 205, 219
Herodias 257, 258n
Hesychius, priest 23n
Hippocrates 36, 43n
historiography (*see also* chronicles) 123, 160, 211–212, 215, 222, 227–228, 230–234, 304, 306
Homer 57n, 84, 141–143, 172–173, 233, 272
homoerotic (*see also* homosexual) 2–3, 7, 10, 136–137, 140, 143, 319
homophobia 7, 154
homosexuality (*see also* homoerotic, sex/sexual) 316
Ḥunayn ibn Ishāq 41–42, 45–46
hymns/hymnography 1–3, 9–11, 129–130, 260n, 286n, 293n, 295, 299, 301–308, 315–320, 322, 324–329, 331–335

Iamblichus, philosopher 49n, 231
Ibn al-Adim 172n, 173
Ibn al-Athir 162n, 163n, 167, 172n, 173, 176
Ibn al-Nadim 45
icon (s) 11, 85, 130, 169, 190, 205, 242, 243n, 260, 265, 276, 301, 323
  acheiropoieta 85
iconoclasm 48, 189–190, 250, 260, 269n, 301
image/imagery 5, 60, 295
  dream (*see also* dreams) 3, 22n, 64n, 84, 86, 90–91, 210, 214, 293n
  holy (*see also* icons) 11, 204–205, 300–305
  literary 145, 147–149, 174, 297–298, 301, 319
  mental 18, 22, 64n, 72–74, 90–91, 293, 301n
  of God 276n, 303, 305
  typological 301, 303–304
imagination 1–11, 17, 29, 35–44, 46–49, 68, 71, 73–75, 82–83, 86, 90, 217–218, 228, 250, 254, 261, 301n, 318, 320, 324, 330, 337
Italikos, Matthew 162n, 163n, 166n, 167, 170n, 171, 174n, 175n, 176n

Jerusalem 92, 129–130, 160–162, 171, 174, 176, 187, 202–203, 221
Jesus Christ *see also* Logos 10, 20, 68, 126, 215, 222, 234, 269, 274n
  crucifixion of 10, 310
  incarnation of 10, 39, 69, 184, 307, 310, 317, 322, 337
  resurrection of 10, 18, 44, 58, 68, 187, 293, 310
John Chrysostom 9, 253–261, 303, 307n
  Johannite schism 249–250, 253–256, 258, 260
John Climacus 25, 85, 298
John Geometres 322
John II Komnenos, emp. 7, 161–176
John of Damascus 4, 35, 44n, 45–49, 261, 293n, 301, 310
John of Dara 46
John Stobaeus 59n
John the Theologian 189, 280n, 281–282
Julian the Apostate, emp. 8, 112–113, 142, 184n, 186, 187–188, 267, 269n, 283–285
Jupiter Optimus Maximus 111
Justin I, emp. 99, 101–107, 109n, 111, 189, 216
Justin II, emp. 99, 107–111, 115
Justinian I, emp. 103, 105, 107–110, 114, 189, 202

Kedrenos, George 102, 183, 185–187, 192, 196–206, 217n
Khalifa ibn Khayyat 220

Kinnamos 162n, 163n, 165n, 166n, 167n, 169–175
Konstantinos VII, Porphyrogennetos, emp. 7, 103, 136–155, 192
Kozeṙn, Yovhannēs 160, 170, 172–176

letters 7, 45, 82, 85, 104n, 126, 130, 136–157, 168–169, 210, 218, 233, 254–255, 258, 274, 296–297, 319
liturgy 9–11, 129–130, 295
  Byzantine 260n, 284, 294–296, 299–304, 306–310
  liturgical hymns—*see* hymns
Leo V, emp. 185n, 208
Leo VI, emp. 186n
Logos s*ee also* Jesus Christ 10, 57, 62–64, 73n, 92, 307
Longinus 301n
Longinus, brother of Zeno 105n

Magdalino, P. 8n, 120n, 122n, 165n, 167, 168n, 170n, 175n, 183–185, 192, 194–195, 197, 208n
Malalas, John 102, 104, 183, 184, 186, 187–190, 194, 197, 200–201, 216, 271nn
Marcellinus Comes 104n
Marcian 104n, 112–113, 184n, 188–190, 196
Marinus 36n
Mark, monk 23–24
marriage 10, 105, 164, 193, 319, 324, 329
Mattʿēos Uṙhayecʿi *see* Matthew of Edessa
Matthew of Edessa 160–162, 163n, 165n, 166n, 170–176
Maurice, emp. 6, 118, 119, 123–128, 190n, 202, 204–205, 219
Maximus (the) Confessor 5–6, 38, 45, 46n, 72–76, 119, 122–123, 131–133, 295n, 299, 300n, 303, 322
medicine 35, 37, 41, 43
Meletius the Monk 46
memory 1–4, 10, 72–74, 277n
  construction of 123, 249–261
  cultural 9, 189, 250, 303
  liturgical 10, 295
  location of 35–49
  manipulation of 9, 189, 249
  sacred 11, 295, 301
Messiah, the 6, 119, 123, 129–131, 319n
Michael III, emp. 143, 185n, 193, 218n
Michael IV, emp. 185n, 192n, 193n, 194n, 234
Michael, archangel 127, 268–279, 283
Michael the Syrian 163n, 169, 171n, 216n
Miskawayh 42
monastic(ism) (*see also* dreams, monastic) 3–4, 10–11, 18–19, 21–22, 25, 28–30, 72, 122, 240, 259, 294, 297, 316, 318, 322, 329, 330n, 337
monk(s) 17–25, 29–30, 46, 70, 84, 91, 125, 190, 193, 196, 199, 200, 205, 215, 217, 238n, 243, 261, 298, 318–319, 329
Moral Foundations Theory 250–253
Moschus, John 215
Moses bar Kepha 46
Muhammad 190, 209n, 212–214, 217, 222

Nemesius of Emesa 35, 38–39, 46, 48, 49n, 72
Neoplatonism (*see also* Platonism) 4, 44, 49, 57n, 70, 83–84, 86, 91, 243n
Nero, emp. 111, 112n
Nerses of Lampron 168–169
Nicephorus Gregoras 5, 83, 85, 87–89
Nicholas Cabasilas 306
Nietzsche, F. 92
Niketas Choniates: *see* Choniates, Niketas
Niketas Stethatos 315n, 317–318, 328n
Nikolaos Mystikos 139
nightmare(s) 72n, 210–211, 259
novels, Byzantine 315, 321–322, 329–330, 337

Odo of Deuil 169
Orderic Vitalis 163n, 170n
Origen of Alexandria 3, 5, 22–23, 43n, 57–58, 67–70, 73, 75, 298, 322, 336n
  Origenism 38, 249n

pagan(s) 9–10, 57, 68–70, 85, 187, 211n, 214n, 218, 242n, 260n, 267, 269n, 271n, 272, 274, 278–280, 284, 286
Palaiologan 82–91, 322
Palestine 45, 19, 218
Palladius 4, 11, 19–20, 22, 255n, 256–257, 259
panegyric 6, 107, 230, 233
Persia/Persian 118–119, 123, 129–130, 160–161, 163, 172, 174–175, 212–213, 215, 218–219, 260

Philippikos, emp. 190, 196, 203
philosopher(s) 2–5, 8, 11, 42–43, 45, 61n, 66–67, 82, 102, 202, 209, 216, 231, 233, 245, 328n
philosophy (*see also* Aristotelian, Neoplatonism, Platonism, Stoic) 8, 42–43, 49, 62, 83, 86–87, 123, 231–232, 235–236, 239n, 243–245, 251, 293
Philostorgius 41
Phokas (Phocas), emp. 118–119, 123–125, 128, 133, 205, 219, 234
Photios (Photius) 39n, 41, 329
pilgrim(s) 214, 265, 284, 286
Plato/Platonism (*see also* Neoplatonism) 5, 11, 35–36, 38, 57–64, 66–71, 73–76, 83–87n, 91, 212, 231, 267n, 295, 297
Plotinus, philosopher 38, 44–45, 231
Plutarch 61n, 62
pneuma 5, 37, 39–40, 41n, 47–49
poem(s)/poetry (*see also* hymn(s)) 2, 10–111, 121, 129–130, 144–147, 150, 152–153, 174–175, 294–295, 299, 301, 303, 317–319, 322n, 325–326, 328n, 329–330
Porphyry, philosopher 38n, 44n, 68n, 231
portent(s) 3, 7–8, 111–112, 115, 193, 219–220
Posidonius of Byzantium 40–42
pothos 315, 317, 321–323, 329
Proclus, philosopher 36n, 231
Procopius 101n, 102n, 103, 106, 112–114, 188
Prodromos, Theodore 163n, 170n, 174–175, 321, 323–324, 329, 331
prophecy (*see also* dreams, prophetic) 7, 47, 70, 120, 122–127, 131–132, 160–162, 170, 172–176, 197–198, 200, 203, 211, 227, 229, 280, 282, 286
prophet(s) 190, 203, 206, 209–211, 213–214, 217, 220–222, 229n
Psellos, Michael 2–3, 8, 227–245, 329
Pseudo-Clementines 57, 59
Pseudo-Martyrius 253–257, 259–260
Pseudo-Methodius 174n
Pseudo-Nicephorus, patriarch 85
Pseudo-Symeon 186, 196, 199, 200
purity 4, 20, 25, 30, 69

Qusṭā ibn Lūqā 41–42, 45
Quintilian 64n, 274n

revelation, divine (*see also* dreams, god-sent; epiphanies; visions, divine) 63–64, 67–68, 115, 121–122, 125–126, 133, 204, 212–213, 217, 277, 294, 296
Romanos the Melodist 300n, 307
Romanos I Lekapenos, emp. 139
Romanos II, emp. 140, 208n
Romanos IV Diogenes, emp. 175
romance/romantic 10, 316, 318, 321, 323, 327, 329–330, 331–332, 336–337
Rome 92, 129, 187, 300n
  Church of 215, 257n, 258n
saint(s) 8–9, 11, 44, 85, 125, 128, 189, 198, 208, 211, 214–215, 222, 236n, 256–257, 260, 293n, 294n, 297, 304, 310, 323
  Lives of (see also *hagiography*) 2, 9, 85, 128, 214n, 218, 257, 298, 315n, 318n, 330
sanctuary 10, 265–268, 275, 277, 285
Sassanids 118
Schism, Johannite 9, 249–250, 253, 260
Seneca 29n, 113
Septimius Severus, emp. 112
sex/sexual (*see also* erotic, homosexual) 4–5, 10, 18–22, 26–30, 57–58, 66n, 69–70, 75, 136–140, 144, 150–154, 316, 318–319, 321n, 330
Sextus Empiricus 59n
shrine(s) 9, 11, 111, 214, 242n, 270, 281, 301
Skylitzes, John 183, 185, 186–187, 192–201, 232–234
Smbat Sparapet 163n, 164n, 165n, 166n, 173n
Socrates, philosopher 53, 58–61, 64–67
Socrates scholasticus 256–259
soldiers 8, 103, 106, 112n, 166, 188, 204, 208, 232
Souda 140–142, 149–150
soul 5, 18–24, 35–38, 42–49, 57–66, 68–74, 82–84, 86–91, 146–148, 151–153, 156–157, 203, 235, 237, 239–240, 244, 293–294, 299, 302–309, 316, 319, 324, 327–328, 331, 334
  indivisible 49
  irrational 47, 61n, 73n, 237
  parts of 23, 36, 49, 70, 84
  rational 37, 45, 61n, 64–65, 73n
  sleeping 24n, 43–44, 84n, 297, 308
Sozomen 19n, 256n, 257nn, 258–259

spring, healing 268–269, 274–275, 278–279, 286
Stephanus of Alexandria/Athens 42–43
Stoic(s) 22–23, 36, 57–59, 61n, 62, 65–66, 69–70
Suetonius 111–112
Sufi(s) 212–214
supernatural 8–9, 85–86, 90–91, 121–122, 128, 133, 142, 185, 187, 299, 303
Symeon Logothete 184n, 196
Symeon the New Theologian 315–337
Synesius of Cyrene 2–3, 5, 11, 82–91
Syria(n) 38, 45–46, 162, 163n, 166n, 170–172, 175, 216
  Syriac 45–46, 128, 162, 219

temple(s) 9, 129, 184, 202, 271
Tarasios, patriarch 191
Theodore of Trimithus 256–260
Theodore Prodromos *see* Prodromos, Theodore
Theodore the Stoudite 316n, 322
Theodoros of Kyzikos 136, 139–141, 143–147, 150–156
Theophanes Confessor 6, 102, 111n, 183–184, 186, 188–191, 194, 196, 201, 209, 216–218, 219n, 221–222
Theophanes Continuatus 122n, 140n, 143, 194, 208n, 218
Theophilus of Alexandria 9, 254–255, 257–259
Theophilus of Edessa 216, 219n
Theophylact Simocatta 6, 119, 122n, 123–128, 131, 133, 218–219
Thessalonica/Thessaloniki 37, 85, 190n, 202, 217
treatises 2, 4, 36, 46, 111, 317
  on dreams 5, 82–85, 87–91
Turkey 265
  Turks 160–163, 167, 173–174, 176
Tzetzes, John 174n

Usama Ibn-Munqidh 175n

Valens, emp. 41, 202
Valentinian, emp. 41, 184n, 188
Valentinian III, emp. 109n
vaticinia ex eventu 119–125, 127–129, 131, 210n, 218
ventricle theory 37, 39n, 40, 42, 46–48, 50–51
vermis 41n, 42n, 50–51
Vespasian, emp. 111
visions (*see also* daydreams, dreams) 5, 7–9, 11, 60, 63–65, 82–85, 227–229, 237, 242, 245, 258, 279, 286, 293–297, 299
  angelic 68n, 121, 129–131, 213, 216–217, 270, 279–280, 282–283
  divine 62–64, 82, 92, 184–187, 189–190, 200, 203–205, 215–216, 266
  nocturnal 63–64, 82, 101, 103, 108, 112, 126, 191, 202, 204, 270, 279, 286, 299
  oneiric 84–85, 141–142, 187
  prophetic 5–7, 68, 91, 99, 102, 111–112, 123, 188–189, 191–192, 206, 294n
  waking 7, 68, 112, 136, 140–143, 149–151, 154–155, 193, 196, 203–204, 213, 271, 293, 295, 297, 299

William of Tyre 162n, 163n, 164n, 165–166, 170–171, 174nn
wisdom 8, 62, 66, 76, 108, 155, 212, 231, 244, 274, 321
worship 10, 130, 145, 169, 198, 214, 260, 269, 278, 284, 295, 322, 326, 336

Xenophon 59n, 84n

yetzer hara 57, 59, 75

Zerubbabel 6, 119, 123, 129–133
Zeus 61n, 268, 274, 276n, 279, 286,